

SUNNY BOY AT THE SEASHORE



RAMY ALLISON WHITE



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SUNNY BOY AT THE SEASHORE

BY

RAMY ALLISON WHITE

Author of

“SUNNY BOY IN THE COUNTRY,” “SUNNY
BOY AT THE SEASHORE,” ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

CHARLES L. WRENN

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SUNNY BOY AT THE SEASHORE

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SUNNY BOY AT THE SEASHORE

CHAPTER I

AN UNEXPECTED RIDE

“O H, Ruth! Oh, Nelson! O-hoo!”

Sunny Boy puckered up his mouth and tried his best to whistle, but he couldn’t quite manage it.

“Ru-th! Nelson!” he shouted again. “Come on over! I want to tell you something!”

Then up the steps from the laundry in the basement of their house, where they had been hunting string for a kite, came Nelson and Ruth Baker, who lived next door.

Sunny Boy stood in the gateway his father had cut in the fence between the two yards and danced up and down impatiently.

“Hurry up!” he urged them. “Listen!

We're going to the seashore day after to-morrow! Mother said so."

Nelson sat down comfortably on the grass. He was rather a fat boy.

"We're going to the mountains to visit my grandmother, next week," he said. "But you just got back from being away."

And indeed Sunny Boy and his mother had returned the night before from a long visit with Sunny's Grandpa Horton who lived on a beautiful farm.

Little Ruth Baker, who was only four years old, beamed cheerfully at Sunny Boy.

"We went to the seashore while you were gone," she informed him. "The water was very wet. I went paddling, but Nelson wore a bathing suit."

"I've a bathing suit, too," announced Sunny Boy. "The brook at Grandpa's was too cold, so I didn't wear it. But I'm going to learn to swim down at Nestle Cove. Daddy's going to teach me."

Nelson looked up from straightening out the tangle of string.

“Did you sleep on the train going to your grandpa’s?” he asked. “We have to stay two nights, an’ eat and sleep an’ everything on the train before we get to my grandma’s.”

Sunny Boy, stretched full length in his express wagon, kicked his heels excitedly.

“We ate on the train,” he said eagerly. “But—what you think?—we’re going to Nestle Cove in Daddy’s new automobile!”

“I saw it out in front yesterday,” Nelson volunteered. “It’s a nice big one. I’ll bet I could most run one!”

“P’haps,” admitted Sunny Boy doubtfully. “Anyway, you have to be grown-up before they let you—Daddy said so. Mother’s going, an’ Harriet, an’ Aunt Bessie and Miss Mart’son.” Sunny Boy meant Miss Martinson, a school teacher and Aunt Bessie’s best friend, but his tongue had a trick of skipping letters when he pro-

nounced long words. "And Aunt Bessie has a house with a big porch, and she says I can sleep in a hammock like a sailor if I want to. An' I'm going to make a fish pond in the sand."

"Look out you don't get scared by a crab," Nelson advised him. "Ruth did. She screamed and screamed. I went fishing with my daddy on a great long pier, but we didn't catch anything."

"I saved all the pebbles," Ruth began hopefully.

"I went fishing in the brook." Sunny Boy was forgetting that it isn't polite to interrupt another.

"I got so sunburned it all peeled off, and then—" Nelson was eager to tell his experiences, too.

"My goodness, children, how you do chatter!" Mrs. Baker opened the gate in the fence and beckoned smilingly to her youngsters. "Hello, Sunny dear. Glad to be

home again? Ruth, Mother needs you now to try on the new frock, and, Nelson, you'll have to go to the store for me. Come right away, dears—you'll see Sunny again before he goes away."

Nelson gathered up his string obediently and trotted through the gate. Ruth slipped her hand into her mother's and followed him. Left alone, Sunny Boy wiggled to a more comfortable position in his wagon and gave himself up to pleasant thoughts of the coming trip.

"Look here, Sunny Boy, your brains will be absolutely baked!" Aunt Bessie descended on him from the back porch. "My dear child, this yard is the warmest place in the city in the morning. Your mother asked me to see what you were doing. Why don't you go out in front and play where it is shady?"

"With you?" asked Sunny Boy happily. Aunt Bessie sat down on one end of the

wagon which tipped perilously, and hugged him.

“No, lambie, not with me,” she answered. “I must run home and help Harriet pack another box, and then I am to meet Betty Martinson and buy a porch swing. After that, let’s see—after that I have to give a little girl a music lesson. But when we get to the seashore I’ll play with you.”

“All right,” agreed Sunny Boy sensibly. “But couldn’t you stay a minute, Auntie?”

“Not half a minute, honey.” Aunt Bessie rose and smoothed out her pretty blue linen frock. “You run along now and don’t go far away, because it will be lunch time before you know it.”

A big black ant crawled across the cement walk at Sunny’s feet.

“I wonder what Jimmie is doing now?” said Sunny Boy aloud, remembering how careful Jimmie always was not to step on the tiniest ant.

Jimmie was the nineteen year old boy who helped Grandpa Horton farm in summer and who went to an agricultural college in winter. Sunny Boy and he had grown to be great friends during the month Sunny and his mother had spent at Brookside, which was the name of the farm where Grandpa and Grandma Horton lived.

Sunny Boy was named for his grandfather, "Arthur Bradford Horton," as you may have read in my first book about him called, "Sunny Boy in the Country." His father and mother called him "Sunny Boy" because he was usually such a cheerful lad-die. Even when he got into scrapes—and in the month he spent at the farm he lost his grandfather's Liberty Bonds and had a horse run away with him—the troubles were somehow straightened out for him and left him smiling again.

Now he and his mother had left Brook-side and dear Grandpa and Grandma Hor-

ton, and with Daddy Horton had come back to their city home to get ready for a visit to the seashore. Aunt Bessie, who was Mrs. Horton's sister, and her friend Miss Martinsson had rented a bungalow at Nestle Cove, and they wanted Sunny Boy and his mother to come and stay with them.

- The sun was blazing down into the back yard, and it really was very hot. Sunny Boy took his wagon down the laundry steps into the house, stopping for a moment to get a drink of water at the sink, on through the front basement hall and up the steps out into the street.

“Well, well, you back?” The postman, on the steps of the Bakers’ house, smiled at him. “Have a nice time?”

“Oh, yes,” said Sunny Boy, with satisfaction. “An’ day after to-morrow Daddy’s going to take us in the auto to Nestle Cove.”

“Well, you *are* having a fine summer,”

replied the postman heartily. "Don't get so tanned that, when you come back, I might take you for a little chocolate boy, will you?"

"Oh, no," Sunny assured him. "I don't mean to."

Whistling pleasantly, the postman went on up the street, and Sunny Boy, pushing his wagon idly back and forth by the tongue, thought that when he grew up he would be a postman too.

"But I don't know whether I'd like to be a postman in the city where I'd see a lot of people and know such a lot of children, or be one in the country, like the postman that comes to Brookside farm, and ride around all day in a buggy. That would be fun. I could know children in the country, too. There was an awful lot of Hatch children, seven of them."

Sunny Boy was thinking of the children

of the tenant who lived on Grandpa's farm, and with whom he played while he was visiting at Brookside.

“ ‘Lo!’” called the girl across the street, sweeping the pavement.

“Hello!” responded Sunny politely.

She had red hair and that reminded him of Araminta, the little girl at Grandpa Horton's house. He wished Araminta lived in the city where he could see her every day. Sunny Boy, you will perceive, had what his Aunt Bessie called a “wishing fit” this summer morning.

“Out of my way, kid!” A thin, freckle-faced boy with the lightest hair and eyebrows Sunny Boy had ever seen leaped from the laundry wagon that drew up to the curb. “Haven't any time to fool this morning. This 266 Glenn Avenue? Yep? Well, hustle now and don't keep me waiting for those shirts to be done up. Rush order, too, it is.”

Sunny Boy had a dim idea that this boy was poking fun at him, and he frowned a little. But Mrs. Horton had heard through the screen door, and she came, bringing the package of shirts.

"Are you sure they will be returned to-morrow?" she asked anxiously. "We leave early Thursday morning."

"Oh, they'll be ready in plenty of time," said the boy reassuringly. "Don't you worry—the Star Laundry never breaks its word; we can't afford to."

He ran down the walk, tossed the package into the back of the wagon, and hurried across the street to another house.

Mrs. Horton laughed.

"What a very important young man!" she said. "Well, Sunny Boy, are you having a good time? Where are Ruth and Nelson?"

"They had to go in," answered Sunny Boy. "Mother, could I get an ice-cream cone?"

"Not before lunch, dear," decided Mrs. Horton. "Now I have to finish the mending. Keep out of the sun, won't you? It's one of the warmest days we've had."

She closed the screen door and Sunny returned to his express wagon.

"I could tie it on back," he said aloud.

The laundry wagon was still standing where the freckle-faced boy had left it, and the horse was slowly but surely going to sleep, "right in his tracks," as Harriet would have said had she been there to see. His head kept nodding lower and lower, and Sunny Boy privately decided that the only thing that kept it from hitting the asphalt was the big round collar the horse wore.

Sunny Boy got up from the step and walked down to the wagon, dragging his express cart behind him. He had often seen other boys tie their toy wagons on behind real wagons, and he knew exactly how it was done.

“I’ll just pretend,” he told himself, glancing up at the windows of the house uneasily. “I won’t really go for a ride.”

There was no one to see him knot the rope firmly and make the express cart fast to the laundry wagon. He climbed in and had a blissfully thrilling moment making believe that he was part of an express train.

“I’ll be the baggage car,” he thought. “Toot! Toot!”

Then from across the street came whirling the breezy laundry-wagon boy. This time he had no parcel, but leaped into his seat and took up the reins without going round to the back of his wagon.

“Gid-ap, Lazy-Bones!” he cried to the sleepy horse. “What do you think this is—a cab-stand? Gid-ap!”

And Sunny Boy and his wagon moved gently off down the street.

He could easily have tumbled out, but that would mean to lose his wagon. And

the laundry boy was whistling so shrilly through his teeth that there was no hope of being able to make him hear, even if he called out. Besides, Sunny Boy thought that he might very likely be cross and scold about small boys hitching to his wagon.

“I—I—don’t believe Mother would like it,” said poor Sunny Boy forlornly, as the horse broke into a gentle trot.

CHAPTER II

ENDING A BUSY DAY

“**I** KNOW my mother wouldn’t like it,” said Sunny Boy.

The laundry wagon horse was galloping now, urged on by the freckle-faced boy who was singing loudly as the light wagon swayed from side to side. Sunny Boy looked very little and frightened trailing on in his wagon behind.

A big brown dog bounced out at him and barked madly.

“Go ’way!” cried Sunny, for the dog reminded him of the fairy-tale wolf with very white teeth and such a red mouth. “Go ’way, old dog!”

Slish! the laundry wagon swerved to avoid

another wagon, and Sunny Boy nearly tumbled out. An old gentleman stood on the sidewalk and brandished his cane at him.

“Hi, you!” he called, “don’t you know you’re likely to be killed? Why don’t the policemen—”

Sunny Boy couldn’t hear the rest of what he said, but, looking back, he saw the old gentleman still standing on the walk shaking his cane angrily.

Sunny Boy was more than willing to let go, but he didn’t see how he could. They were nearing the end of the street now, and the houses were fewer with more ground between.

“Look behind!” an iceman delivering ice called to the laundry boy, at the same time pointing to the back of the wagon.

The laundry boy may have looked, but of course he couldn’t see Sunny’s wagon from where he sat, and he apparently had no in-

tention of stopping his horse to see if any one was stealing a "hitch." Instead he brought the whip down smartly, and the horse leaped forward with a sudden jerk that made Sunny's neck snap.

"My land!" poor Sunny gasped.

It was an expression he had learned from the red-haired Araminta.

Goodness knows what might have happened if they had had to turn a corner, or if the rope hadn't broken. But break it did, and Sunny Boy and the laundry wagon parted company just as they came opposite to a vacant lot. Sunny's wagon shot off to one side and, as there was no pavement and no curbing, the wagon kept going until it brought up in a clump of elderberry bushes.

"Hurt you, kid?" and a man who had seen him came running across the street. "That's a mighty dangerous way to play, and the littler you are the worse it is. I suppose you've seen the big boys do it.

Take my advice and leave wagons alone after this."

As he talked, he lifted Sunny and the express wagon out of the bushes, brushed Sunny Boy off neatly. He now stood smiling down at him so good-naturedly that it was impossible to keep from smiling back.

"I thought you was scolding," said Sunny Boy, in whose experience people never smiled when they scolded.

Sunny Boy suddenly remembered that Aunt Bessie always made big round eyes and a round mouth and held up her hands whenever he said "you was," and that his mother always looked at him and shook her head just the very least possible bit. But never mind; it was too late to go back and say it differently now, and besides he must hurry on and explain to this nice man who was smiling down at him.

"It didn't hurt me, but one wheel's bent," he said.

“That’s where it skidded across the street,” explained the man, bending down to examine the wagon. “Not worth mentioning, though. I’m thankful it wasn’t your leg that was bent. Now don’t you think you’d better call it a day and go home?”

Sunny was willing enough to go home, though he didn’t know what the man meant by calling it a day.

“I mean that one such adventure’s enough for a morning,” smiled the new friend, as he saw that Sunny Boy looked puzzled.

Sunny agreed to this, and they shook hands gravely and the man went on down the street and Sunny and his express wagon headed for home.

He found his mother getting lunch, and she was very glad to see him because, as she said, she was lonesome.

“We’ll have to hurry,” she greeted him when he had put the express wagon in the back yard and found her in the kitchen.

“Daddy is coming home at half-past one to help get us ready to go. Have you washed your hands, dear? Well, then you and I will have our bread and milk right here on the kitchen table.”

Sunny Boy enjoyed this. Mrs. Horton spread a little white cloth at one end of the table and they had bread and milk and cold boiled eggs and four chocolate cookies—two apiece—just like a picnic. The kitchen was the only room in the house that seemed natural to Sunny, anyway. The house had been shut all the time they were staying at Grandpa Horton’s, and as they were only going to be home two days before going to the seashore Mrs. Horton said it was not worth while to unwrap or unpack anything.

“Now we’ll wash the dishes,” declared Mother, when they had finished their lunch. “Then I’ll go upstairs and darn socks while you watch at the window for Daddy. Poor

Daddy! No one mended his socks for him while we were gone."

Sunny Boy helped Mother carry the milk and the butter back to the ice-box, and dried the dishes as she washed them. Then he ran down into the yard and hung up the scalded tea towels for her.

"Daddy says little boys can help most as much as little girls," said Sunny seriously, watching Mother put the glass pitcher on the high shelf that he hadn't been able to reach. "When Harriet isn't here, do I help, Mother?"

"Precious," Mother assured him, giving him a bear hug, "you help me every minute of the day, whether Harriet is here or not. And when you're a man I won't be any more proud of you than I am right now."

They went upstairs, Mrs. Horton to darn the neglected socks, and Sunny to watch for Daddy and the new car.

"Here he is! I'll open the door! O-hoo,

Daddy!" Sunny Boy saw the dark blue car draw up before the house and stop, and he banged noisily on the window screen to attract his father's attention. Then he dashed downstairs.

"Well, well, who's this young cyclone?" inquired Mr. Horton, catching Sunny Boy in his arms and lifting him to his shoulder. "Saw me drive up, didn't you? Where's Mother?"

"Upstairs. Daddy, let's go out in the automobile! Where you going to keep it? Can I drive?" Sunny bounced about excitedly as he put his questions one after another.

"Easy, easy," protested Mr. Horton. "The automobile will be an old story fast enough. Let me have a word with Mother and then perhaps you and I will have an errand to do down town."

Mrs. Horton smiled when she saw Sunny's flushed face.

"Some one is excited," she teased. "Well, Daddy dear, what did Bessie say about the suitcase?"

"I called her up, but she wasn't in," answered Mr. Horton. "Miss Martinson seemed to think, though, that they'd better have it. I'll go up and drag it out now and Sunny and I can run it over to her in the car."

"Oh, yes, let's," coaxed Sunny Boy, without a very clear idea of what the talk was about, but sure that a ride in the automobile was in some way connected with it.

"Think you can come up to the store-room with me and give me a hand?" asked his father. "I have to get a suitcase for Aunt Bessie, and I suppose it is under three trunks with the empty goldfish globe on top."

"Why, Daddy Horton, what a way to talk!" Mrs. Horton pretended to be very indignant. "The suitcase is the first thing you'll see when you open the door. I

thought we might need it before the summer was over, so I left it where it would be easy to get."

Sure enough, Sunny and Daddy found the suitcase without any trouble, and they brought it downstairs and Mother dusted it off, and then they carried it down to the automobile and put it in the back.

Sunny Boy climbed into the car and sat very still with his eyes straight ahead. He hoped Nelson and Ruth Baker were watching him. Mr. Horton walked around the car to the other side, got in, and closed the door. He waved to Mother in the window, put both hands on the wheel, and away they went.

"Can I help drive, going to Nestle Cove, Daddy?" Sunny asked, watching carefully, so that he might remember all the things he saw Daddy do. "I drove Peter and Paul for Grandpa."

Peter and Paul were the farm horses.

“Well, you see, Sunny Boy,” Daddy explained, skillfully steering the car around a heavy coal truck, “automobiles are different from horses. You can’t talk to them and tell them what to do. You have to be older, and stronger, and taller, to manage a machine. See how constantly I have to use my feet? You are not tall enough to reach the brakes. And, anyway, the law says little boys can’t drive cars, even to help their daddies. They must be at least eighteen years old.”

“Yes, I’member, you told me,” said Sunny sorrowfully.

Daddy never turned aside his questions with an “Oh, you wouldn’t understand, wait till you’re older” kind of answer, and Sunny really was used to reasoning things out.

“I’ll carry the suitcase,” he offered, when they came to Aunt Bessie’s house. “Let me ring, Daddy.”

Aunt Bessie lived in an apartment house

and the colored boy who answered the bell knew Sunny very well indeed.

“Miss Andrew ain’t home,” he said. “But Miss Martinson am. I’ll take you-all up.”

Aunt Bessie was Miss Andrew, and of course the colored boy couldn’t have known much English grammar to say “ain’t.” Or, perhaps, he forgot what his mother told him about always saying “is not.” We’ll hope you never do. Anyway, this boy had the most delightful, rich, soft voice, and no matter what he said it always sounded pleasant.

“How lovely of you!” Miss Martinson, Aunt Bessie’s friend who lived with her and helped keep house in the apartment, flung open the door almost as soon as they lifted the heavy old-fashioned knocker. “Come right in. We have a bundle of things that simply won’t go in the trunk and Bessie has every suitcase packed so full now we’re in despair.”

Miss Martinson was little and dark and pretty. She taught girls in a large public school how to baste and hem and tuck and, after a while, make dresses. She was a sewing teacher.

Sunny and Mr. Horton couldn't stay very long because they knew that Mother at home would be needing them. But before they went, Sunny ran out to the kitchen to find his dear Harriet.

"Here's my own boy, bless his dear heart!" and Harriet, whose eyes were as blue as Sunny Boy's, and who wore a blue dress that just matched them and her usual big, white apron—Harriet's aprons were always whiter than other people's—swooped down upon Sunny Boy and gave him a tremendous hug. "Did you have a lovely time on the farm, darlin'? And did you miss Harriet? Never mind, we're going to have a fine time down at the sea. Think of it—you'll be sailing boats and going swimming and all!"

“Sunny, coming?” called Mr. Horton.

“Here, give this to your mother,” and Harriet hastily put a square box into his hands. “ ‘Tis a cake I baked for the lunch on the way down. I made two of ‘em, one for her and one for Miss Bessie.”

“Daddy,” Sunny Boy spoke for the first time on the way home, holding the cake box carefully on his lap, “how long does it take to get to Nestle Cove?”

“Oh, about six or eight hours with fair traveling,” answered Mr. Horton. “Why, Son?”

“I was just thinking,” said Sunny. “Harriet made a cake for us to eat on the way.”

“And I suspect Mother will be busy all day to-morrow putting up a picnic lunch for us,” responded his father. “You see, we’ll find a nice shady spot about noon when the sun is too hot to make driving comfortable,

and we'll sit down and rest on the grass and eat all those good things up."

"That will be fun," agreed Sunny enthusiastically. "There's Mother waving to us now. Does she want something, Daddy?"

"Don't get out," called Mrs. Horton, hurrying to them. "The laundryman telephoned Mrs. Baker that their wagon has been in an accident and the clothes are hopelessly scattered. They want you to go down and see if any of yours are missing."

CHAPTER III

GETTING READY

“TAKE me with you, Daddy?” Sunny Boy begged. “I could see the accident.”

“There’ll be nothing to see,” answered Mr. Horton, smiling. “I’m only going to the laundry office, and that wouldn’t interest you. I think you’d better stay with Mother and help her.”

“All right,” agreed Sunny Boy cheerfully, climbing out of the car and holding the cake box carefully right side up.

He and Mother went into the kitchen, while Mr. Horton turned the car and went off down the street.

“Gee!” exclaimed Sunny, watching

Mother fill the tea kettle. "Gee! I guess that laundry-wagon boy wishes he'd called it a day."

"Called it a day?" repeated Mrs. Horton, puzzled. "What do you mean, dear? And is it absolutely necessary that you use 'gee' twice in one sentence?"

Sunny Boy admitted that it wasn't. Then, while they waited for the kettle to boil, he told Mother about his morning adventure and the man who had picked him out of the bushes and advised him to call it a day.

"Why, you might have been hurt!" said Mrs. Horton seriously. "Don't do that again, Son. Probably the boy is a reckless driver, or he wouldn't have had this accident, but no driver can watch out for little folks who hitch on behind wagons. Now we'll set the table in the dining-room tonight, and go out and wait for Daddy on the front steps."

Sunny Boy helped Mother so well that the table was set and everything in readiness for supper and they had been out on the front steps for nearly ten minutes before they saw Mr. Horton coming around the corner.

Sunny Boy ran to meet him.

"Did you walk?" he asked disappointedly. "Where's the automobile? Did you scold the laundry-wagon boy?"

"I put the automobile to bed," answered Daddy, waving to Mother. "This fall, perhaps, we can build a garage out back of the house. I'll see. But just now a man named Mr. Taggart has to keep the car at night for us. Did you help Mother?"

"Indeed he did!" Mrs. Horton held open the screen door for them to go in. "I haven't missed Harriet at all."

At the supper table Sunny remembered the accident again.

“What did the laundry-wagon boy say?” he asked his father.

“The poor chap’s in the hospital,” replied Mr. Horton soberly. “Nothing more serious than bad bruises, they say. I imagine, from the way the superintendent talked, that he’s been in pickles before this for careless driving. There were half a dozen of us there, reclaiming stuff. How many shirts was I supposed to have in that bundle, Olive?”

“Seven, and eleven collars,” said Mrs. Horton promptly.

“Well, only six had my mark on ‘em,” declared Mr. Horton. “A number of bundles were entirely missing, stolen during the excitement of the crash they think, or hopelessly torn and mangled. He drove right into a big touring car, the police say.”

“I have to go over to Mrs. Baker’s,” announced Mrs. Horton when supper was finished. “You’ll go up with Sunny Boy,

won't you, Harry? He must have a hot bath."

"It's day yet," protested Sunny Boy. "I don't have to go to bed till night."

"Well, if you're going to get up early in the morning and help me pack stuff in the car, I think you'd better have a nice, hot bath and go to sleep as fast as you can. Of course, if you are not going to get up in the morning, and would rather stay down and wash the dishes, why that's another matter entirely."

Sunny Boy giggled.

"I'll bath me," he decided. "You sit on the hamper and watch, Daddy."

Daddy did sit on the hamper and watch. He also helped with the drying. Then he pulled up the awnings all across the front of the house so that the rooms would be cool during the night. Then he found the woolly dog, that hadn't gone to the farm but that was Sunny's bedfellow when he was at

home, and put him in bed with Sunny Boy.

“Good night, laddie,” Daddy bent down and kissed Sunny Boy. “If you wake up first, come in and call me.”

When Sunny Boy opened his eyes it was to find the sun streaming in the windows and to hear the locusts singing away for dear life. He got softly out of bed, tucked the woolly dog under his arm, and paddled into Daddy and Mother’s room. It was empty.

“Well, well, here he is!” There stood Daddy in the doorway behind him. “Breakfast’s almost ready, and we need a certain young man to help us with the sliced peaches and cream, to say nothing of the brown toast Mother’s made for us. Come on, and see if you can find the blue sailor suit on the little rocking chair under the window nearest the closet door.”

The lonesome feeling Sunny had had for a moment when he found his father and mother had gone downstairs ahead of him,

went away, and he hurried to help Daddy find the sailor suit. They knocked over so many things in their search, and laughed so much and made such a great deal of noise that Mother came up and pretended to scold, though really she came to find the suit, tie the tie for Sunny, and brush his yellow hair.

“Now if you don’t come down to breakfast this minute,” she told them when Sunny Boy was as neat as neat could be—“well, you can’t have any toast, that’s all!”

So they all three hurried down and found plenty of toast; and very good it was, too.

“Each one must carry his plate out to the kitchen,” ordered Mr. Horton, when they had finished. “And then Sunny Boy and I will go round and get the car. Whatever you can pack to-day, Olive, will save us time in the morning. I’d like to make an early start, because I’m afraid we’re in for a hot spell, and the earlier we get off, the more comfortable we’ll be.”

“The trunks are going this morning,” said Mrs. Horton. “Bessie promised to get theirs off, too. All I have to do—My dear child, what are you going to do with that?” she broke off.

Sunny Boy stood in the doorway, Harriet’s cake on the best china cake-plate in his hands. It was a cake with white icing and it looked delicious.

“It’s to eat on the way,” explained Sunny Boy. “Harriet said so. I was going to put it in the automobile under the seat where it wouldn’t get mussed.”

“But I’m going to put up a nice lunch for us,” said Mother. “Harriet’s cake really ought to be wrapped in wax paper, you know, and go in a box. You shall fix it for me this morning. Now run along with Daddy, and bring our shiny new car around for the bundles.”

Sunny met Mr. Taggart that morning. He was a short, round man with little twin-

kling blue eyes and he wore overalls that were very black and greasy from the oil and grease on the cars he took care of.

"I've got a little boy 'bout your age," he told Sunny. "You're about five, aren't you? I thought so. Ted's five and a half. In you go! Ted's a little heavier than you are. He's down in the country now, visiting his grandma."

Daddy started the car, and Sunny leaned out to call back to Mr. Taggart.

"My grandma lives in the country, too, and we're going to the seashore to-morrow."

Mr. Taggart waved his hand to show that he heard and understood, and Daddy backed the car out into the street.

"Let's get Mother and go now," suggested Sunny. "Why is there always a lot to do before we do anything, Daddy?"

Mr. Horton smiled.

"Well, most things that are worth while

or give us lasting pleasure, laddie, require work and effort," he said. "You'll find that out as you go along. You see, we might go this morning, but we'd have to come back in a day or two for more clothes, or the swing, or some of the other things Mother is busily thinking of and packing up this morning. And down at Nestle Cove, the man who owns the cottage Aunt Bessie has rented is opening it and cleaning it and putting it in good order for us, so we'll be comfortable the rest of the summer. If he didn't look at it till ten or fifteen minutes before we were due there, the roof might leak, or the rooms be damp and dirty, and then we'd have to spend the first week of our stay making things pleasant and comfortable. So we'll wait till the time to go, and do everything there's to be done while we're waiting, shall we?"

"Let's," nodded Sunny Boy, who really understood. "Look, Daddy, there's Ruth

and Nelson Baker out in front of their house. Ruth's waving to you."

Mr. Horton stopped the car, and beckoned to the Baker children.

"Hop in," he said pleasantly. "I have to go over to Aunt Bessie's apartment and you might as well have the little ride. I'll tell your mother where we're going. Wait for me."

He went on into the house, and Ruth and Nelson scrambled into the back of the automobile.

"Isn't it hot?" said Nelson. "I'll bet there's a thunder-storm this afternoon. Don't scratch the paint, Ruth."

"I'm not!" retorted Ruth indignantly. "Let me ride up in front, Sunny?"

"Don't you let her," urged Nelson. "You always want to do whatever you see any one else do. Sit down, or I'll tell Mother."

Ruth, who had been trying to climb over

the back of the seat, sat down, not so much to please her brother as because she saw Mr. Horton coming.

“Now we’re off,” he said, getting in. “I’m to take you two Bakers down to your father’s office after we’ve been to the apartment. I hear you’ve been wearing out your sandals at a shocking rate.”

“And Father’s going to get us new ones,” guessed Nelson.

“Right,” responded Mr. Horton. “He’s a pretty nice father to have.”

CHAPTER IV

HELPING HERE AND THERE

DADDY and Sunny Boy found Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson very glad to see them. Aunt Bessie was packing, Miss Martinson washing some cut glass to be put away, and Harriet in the kitchen, as usual, was making something good to eat.

"Don't you want to stay with me, lambie?" Aunt Bessie asked Sunny. "You may play the piano-player all day, if you like. And sleep to-night on the funny couch that opens when you press a button, and Daddy and Mother and the car will come and get us in the morning. Will you?"

Sunny Boy looked at Daddy.

"I guess we'd better hurry back," he said

politely. He caught hold of his father's hand and pulled him toward the door. "We have to do a lot of things while we're waiting for to-morrow," he explained.

Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson laughed.

"Tell Mother, then, Busy Bee," said Aunt Bessie blowing him a kiss, "not to make egg sandwiches, because Harriet has two dozen of them. And we'll see you bright and early in the morning."

Next, Ruth and Nelson Baker were left at their father's office down town in a big gray building, and then Daddy and Sunny Boy drove home and went in to see what they could do for Mother.

"Why do you wrap 'em in a cloth, Mother?" asked Sunny, leaning against the kitchen table and watching Mrs. Horton put a dozen sandwiches in a damp cloth.

"So they'll keep fresh, dear," she answered. "I'll put them in the ice box this way and to-morrow morning they'll be just

as nice as they are now. Want to taste this?"

Sunny tasted the spoon she held out to him.

"It isn't egg, is it?" he asked anxiously. "Aunt Bessie says not to make egg ones, 'cause Harriet did."

Mrs. Horton laughed.

"It isn't egg," she assured him. "That was minced ham you tasted. I hope all sandwiches don't taste alike to you, Sunny. Now let me see—it's only half past ten. I think I'll go up and put the bedrooms in order. Sunny Boy, if you'll stay here and let the expressman in when he comes for the trunks, I'd like it very much. I want Daddy to tie up some packages for me."

Sunny Boy, left alone in the kitchen, inspected the three boxes open on the table. Sandwiches filled one, another was evidently for fruit, since oranges were already in it, and the third was for cake. Harriet's cake,

wrapped in waxed paper, filled half of it.

"Mother said I could do that. I s'pose I wasn't here," thought Sunny Boy. "I want to help fix the lunch."

He sat down to think on the chair that obligingly turned into a step-ladder if you knew how to twist it. Presently he carried the chair over to the kitchen closet and stood up on it to look over the shelves. Very likely his mother, with so much to do, might forget the most necessary thing. He poked around among the boxes, opened several and smelled the contents. Finally one seemed to please him very much, and he scrambled down and went back to the lunch boxes.

"There!" He tucked his find in neatly under the sandwiches. "P'rhaps they'll be s'prised. They can—"

"Sunny! Sunny Boy, please bring me the ball of cord in the wall pocket," called Mother.

No sooner had he run upstairs with the

cord than the doorbell rang and down he came to let the expressman in. So it was no wonder that he forgot what he had tucked into the box and never thought of it again.

After the trunks had been carried out, Mrs. Horton said it was time to get lunch, and both Daddy and Sunny helped her and with the dishes afterward. Then Daddy had to go down town, and though Sunny begged to be allowed to go with him in the car, it was decided that he had better stay with Mother.

“Why don’t you go upstairs and see your toys?” Mrs. Horton suggested. “I don’t believe you’ve paid them any attention since you came home. Daddy opened all the windows on the third floor this morning, so it must be nice and cool.”

“Will you come up too?” asked Sunny Boy. “It’s so—so still, Mother.”

The house was still, as houses often seem when they have not been lived in for weeks.

“I’ll come up and start the clock on the



Upstairs Sunny Boy found his toys exactly as he had left them

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playroom shelf," said Mrs. Horton briskly. "And you might get out your kiddie car. I saw Nelson with his this morning."

Upstairs Sunny Boy found his toys exactly as he had left them. The Teddy Bear sat on the kiddie car, his forepaws resting patiently on the steering bar. The drum was hanging on its nail, and the train of cars was still jumbled together from the last glorious wreck.

"See, here's where you mended the drum," said Sunny Boy, showing Mother the neatly pasted tear. "I'd like to see if it is all right. Would you mind if I drummed ve-ry softly, Mother?"

Mrs. Horton was willing.

"Rub-a-dub, dub!" went the drum-sticks merrily. "Rub-a-dub, dub!" the drummer stopped suddenly.

"Nelson has a new game, Mother," announced Sunny Boy. "He stands up paper soldiers—no, I guess they're pasteboard sol-

diers—and has a little gun that shoots marbles at them. The drum made me think of the soldiers."

"Did you play the game with Nelson, Sunny?"

"No'm, not yet. He said I might, though. But I'd like a soldier game of my own. How can I shoot at my soldiers, Mother?"

"That's easy," said Daddy from the doorway. He had come in and no one had heard him. "Stand your soldiers up in a row, Sunny Boy, and roll marbles at them. Olive, will you come down and help me find that old fishing tackle?"

Left alone, Sunny Boy got all his paper soldiers out and stood them up in two long rows.

"Nelson gives the enemy the first shot," he said to himself. "He thinks that's polite. So I'll let the enemy roll first."

A white marble rolled over the rug and knocked a corporal and two privates flat.

Quick as a flash the other side fired, and a black marble bowled over three of the enemy.

Between firing, the drum, tied round the Teddy Bear's neck for the sake of convenience, was heard in a lively tattoo.

"That's the signals," announced Sunny Boy to the hobby horse that, as Daddy often said, "looked as though he smelled gunpowder." "Three beats means to advance. That's the way they did when Grandpa went to war."

"Bang!" another enemy went down, carried away by a green glass marble.

"I wish Nelson was here," said Sunny Boy earnestly. "Two sides could fire at once then."

Still, he managed to have a pretty good time without Nelson, and when Daddy called him down to supper he put the soldiers back in their box reluctantly.

"Which side won?" smiled Mrs. Horton at the table.

"Well, you see," explained Sunny Boy carefully, "neither really won, Mother."

"I thought one side always won," said Mother humbly.

"My, no!" Sunny assured her. "When Daddy called me there were ever so many soldiers alive yet. The am—am—"

"Ammunition?"

"Yes'm, the amm'nition gave out."

"But we used to use our marbles over and over," said Mr. Horton. "A bag of marbles ought to furnish enough shots for an army twice the size of yours."

Sunny Boy attempted to make it all clear.

"I did shoot 'em over and over," he said patiently. "Only after a while they were all under the bookcase."

Mr. Horton laughed.

"I'll get them out for you with a long pole to-morrow," he promised.

After supper they sat out on the front steps for an hour or so and talked to the

Bakers, who were also sitting out on their steps. And then it was bedtime for those who were going to take a trip the next day.

“Are you coming every night, Daddy?” Sunny Boy asked, as they climbed the stairs on their way to bed.

“Can’t make it every night,” was the answer. “But I’ll be down every Saturday afternoon and spend Sunday with you. And if I can take a Friday off now and then, I will.”

Sunny Boy, after he was in bed, was perfectly sure that he couldn’t go to sleep.

“I keep thinking about the ocean,” he explained to Daddy, who was hunting for something in the closet in his room. “What you looking for, Daddy? Can we go fishing in the ocean?”

“We can’t if you don’t go to sleep, we can’t even start for the ocean,” said Mr. Horton. “I’m looking for my old golf cap. You go to sleep and I’ll find it.”

“I know where it is.” Sunny got out of bed and pattered across the floor to his toy box. “I thought maybe you didn’t want it any more, and I made believe it was a horse blanket for my gray horse.”

Sure enough, the gray horse had the golf cap neatly pinned about him.

“Well, he won’t take cold without it in summer,” said Mr. Horton cheerfully. “And I thought I’d like to wear the cap while driving the car to-morrow. Sunny, aren’t you going to sleep at all to-night?”

“I don’t feel sleepy,” complained Sunny, climbing into bed and settling the covers again. “Oh, Daddy, I forgot the woolly dog.”

Mr. Horton brought him the woolly dog, kissed him good-night, and put out the light.

“Daddy?”

The door into Daddy and Mother’s room opened a crack.

“Go to sleep,” said Mother severely.

“But, Mother, I just have to ask Daddy one question. Then I will go to sleep—honest.”

So Daddy came in again and sat on the edge of the bed.

“Daddy—” Sunny sat up in bed so that he could see him better, for the light from the street lamp shone across the room. “Daddy, does a crab bite?”

“It does,” said Mr. Horton. “I’ll take you crabbing and you’ll see how it does it. And now—”

“Now I’m going to sleep,” said Sunny hastily.

He just closed his eyes for a second and turned over in a more comfortable position. And then—

“All aboard for Nestle Cove!” There stood Daddy in the middle of his room, calling to him. The sun was shining, and, yes, it was morning!

“What do you know about that!” said

the bewildered Sunny Boy. "I wasn't going to sleep that minute."

"But you did. And in an hour we're to start," Mr. Horton told him. "Mother has already gone downstairs. We'll have to hustle, for we have to go get Aunt Bessie and Miss Betty and Harriet, you know. Let's see who can get dressed first!"

CHAPTER V

SUNNY BOY'S SURPRISE

DADDY wasn't dressed first because he stopped to help Sunny Boy, who had lost one shoe and simply couldn't find it! Finally Sunny discovered it under the bed, and he had it on and laced and the other shoe done, too, before Daddy was ready. Then they raced downstairs, and both tried to kiss Mother at once.

"You crazy boys!" she said, laughing. "I suppose you'll be too excited to eat breakfast. Hurry! Sunny Boy! Why, how you do act! Come now, I'm going to put the eggs on to boil. Sit down and eat your fruit, and stop bothering me."

Sunny could have skipped breakfast with-

out a murmur. Indeed, he suggested that they shouldn't waste time doing the same old thing they did every day; he wasn't hungry, so why not start out right away?

"Well, if you don't want to eat, I do," said Daddy. "You wouldn't want me to faint away from hunger while I was driving the car, would you? I thought not. And if you have your eye on those lunch boxes Mother has for us, you'd better eat breakfast just the same. I might eat *all* the lunch up and then you'd be sorry you missed this buttered toast."

So Sunny Boy did his best to eat, and he really managed pretty well.

After breakfast there was a great scurrying about. Mother washed the dishes, Daddy dried them, and Sunny put them away. All the food that was left in the house was put into a little basket and left with Mrs. Baker for the washerwoman who came to wash for her every Wednesday.

She was a tall colored woman, and Sunny knew her. They often talked over the fence.

"I have seven childern," she used to say. "And I keeps thirteen hens and one rooster. I kin use every scrap of food, yes'm. Don't you ever throw away nothing that can be et."

So Mrs. Horton was always careful to set aside all the left-overs she couldn't use for Molly.

"Now while Daddy is fastening the windows and locking up, we'll be putting on our new linen dusters," said Mrs. Horton. "Let me see, have we forgotten anything? The trunks went yesterday, there are the two suitcases—No, Son, don't lift them, Daddy will carry them down—the lunch boxes are on the hall table. Yes, Harry?"

Mr. Horton on the third floor was calling her.

"Olive, there's a fly in this room—he'll

starve to death this summer. Send Sunny Boy up with the fly-batter, quick."

Mrs. Horton laughed.

"Daddy's remembering something I did ever so long ago," she told Sunny Boy. "What was it? Oh, I haven't time to tell you now. I will, after we've started. Run along up with the fly-batter, precious, and tell Daddy please to hurry."

Mr. Horton killed the fly and carried down the suitcases and took them and the lunch boxes out to the car at the curb. The boy who worked for Mr. Taggart had brought the automobile around soon after breakfast. Mother and Daddy had on long brown linen coats, and Sunny Boy had one, too, made exactly like Daddy's. He was very proud of that new coat.

Then it was time to lock the front door and really start.

"It does take so long to go," sighed Sunny Boy, as he stood waiting with Mother on the

front steps while Daddy made sure that the door was tightly fastened.

"But we want our house to be all here when we come back," Mother reminded him. "Never mind, we're going this minute. There are Nelson and Ruth to say good-by to you, dear."

Nelson and Ruth came down to the car and watched till every one was safely in.

"Good-by!" they called, as Mr. Horton started. "Good-by, Sunny! Have a good time! Good-by!"

Sunny Boy waved to them as long as he could see them, and even after all he could make out was the blur of pink that he knew was Ruth's dress. Then he was ready to talk.

"Where are we going first?" he demanded.

"Why, to get Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson and Harriet, of course," answered Mrs. Horton.

Mr. Horton turned.

"Look here, Sunny Boy," he said. "I figure out that I'm going to feel lonesome with four ladies in the car—you'll have to come up here with me, and then we'll be two to four at least. Here we are. I see Joseph out on the sidewalk with the bags. I'll go up and help with whatever else they have."

The automobile stopped before the apartment house, and Joseph, the colored elevator boy, grinned delightedly at Sunny Boy.

"You's going, ain't you?" he chuckled. "You-all shorely have a fine day. Yes, Sir, Miss Andrew and Miss Ma'tinson is both ready. Guess they's looking out the window. Miss Andrew said to come right up when you-all came."

Mr. Horton went in to tell Aunt Bessie they were waiting for her, and Sunny stayed in the car with Mother.

In a very few minutes Aunt Bessie came out, tying a long green veil over her pretty gray hat.

“Hello, lambie, kiss your old auntie,” she said to Sunny Boy. Aunt Bessie wasn’t old at all, though sometimes she pretended to be. “Olive, I left the canary bird with Mrs. Richards. They’re going to be in town all summer, and a birdcage and a live bird are not the easiest things to carry in a car. Was that all right?”

Aunt Bessie, you see, had been keeping the canary for Mother and Sunny Boy while they were visiting Grandpa Horton.

“I’m glad you didn’t try to bring him,” said Mrs. Horton frankly. “He would likely be frightened, and, anyway, I don’t believe in trying to move pets. Sunny Boy left his collie puppy up on the farm. Here come Betty and Harriet.”

While Mr. Horton helped them into the car, Sunny got out and scrambled into the front seat.

“Why, Sunny Boy! I thought of course you’d stay with us,” cried Miss Martinson.

"Daddy was lonesome with four ladies and only himself up here," explained Sunny seriously. "Now we're two to four."

Every one laughed, and then Daddy took his place and started the engine.

"Now we're off," sighed Aunt Bessie. "It did seem to me that if I had to do one thing more I should scream."

"You're like Sunny," answered Mrs. Horton. "When he is going anywhere he is very impatient of preliminaries."

"What's that?" he asked Daddy.

"Preliminaries?" said Daddy. "Oh, things that come first—like eating breakfast and locking the doors and packing boxes and so on."

"An' killing flies," added Sunny Boy. He turned so that he could talk to his mother more easily.

"You said you'd tell me," he urged her. "Why did you laugh when Daddy said the fly would starve?"

Mrs. Horton smiled.

"Oh, because he likes to tell about the first summer we were married, and I wasn't a very experienced housekeeper," she explained. "We were closing the apartment the day before we were to go to the country for a month, and I found a little live mouse in a trap I had set. I opened the trap and let him go and when your father asked me why I did that, I answered that I couldn't bear to think of the poor creature starving to death."

Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson laughed, but Sunny was puzzled.

"It would be mean to let him starve," he declared. "Wouldn't it, Daddy?"

"Well, yes," admitted Mr. Horton. "But you see, Sunny Boy, we catch mice to prevent them from eating up our good clean food. And Mother let the mouse go, and he probably lived on our pantry shelves that summer. What we should have done was to drown him."

24 SUNNY BOY AT THE SEASHORE

"Oh," said Sunny Boy.

While he thought this over the car turned through the city streets into the suburbs and finally out into the open country. The road was dry and where, but not too dusty, for a recent rain had laid the dust.

"I'm getting hungry," announced Mrs. Horne. "We had such an early breakfast that an eleven o'clock lunch wouldn't be out of the way at all. Let's keep on the look-out for a cool shady spot, and when we find it, stop and have a picnic."

They found the cool, shady spot sooner than they expected. A turn in the road brought them to a white farmhouse with an apple orchard that grew almost up to the front door.

"All of us can eat our lunch under the trees, Harry," said Mrs. Horne. "And if we can get some milk for Sunny, that will be fine."

Mr. Horne went up to the door and

knocked. A young woman opened it. The folk in the car couldn't hear what he said, but he came back in a few moments, smiling.

"She says we may take down the bars and drive right in," he reported. "And she'll bring us out a pitcher of cold milk and will be glad to make a cup of hot tea if any one wants it."

No one wanted hot tea, and when Lucy, that was her name she told them, brought out the ice-cold milk, they assured her it was far more delicious than any tea could be. Lucy couldn't stay, for the dinner was on the stove and she expected the farmer men home to dinner at twelve. Mr. Horton paid her for the milk, and she said that the money would go into her school fund. She was saving to have enough to go away to school in the fall.

"I'm hungry, too," declared Sunny Boy, watching Mother place the goodies on a

white cloth as Harriet opened the boxes and handed them to her.

"I'm glad you have an appetite," said Mother. "Things will taste good to you then. Come, girls and boys, we're ready for you."

Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson passed their box of sandwiches and every one took one. Those were the egg ones Sunny Boy had remembered to tell his mother about. Then Mrs. Horton passed her box, and after all were served and Harriet was putting down the box, meaning to take up the fruit box, she saw something in it.

"What's this?" she asked, putting in her hand and drawing out a round, rather flat box. "Is it something you put in for the sandwiches, Mrs. Horton? Pepper and salt, maybe? It was down under the paper, and I most missed it."

"That's my s'prise!" cried Sunny Boy, who had forgotten about the box he had

taken from the closet shelf. "I put it in, Mother. I like to pack boxes."

"I knew it was nothing I had packed," said Mrs. Horton wonderingly.

But Mr. Horton, who had been leaning over her shoulder to see the box, now rolled over on his back in the grass, shouting with laughter.

"It's the stove polish!" he half-choked.
"What won't that child do next!"

CHAPTER VI

ON THE WAY

“**I**T’S a s’prise,” Sunny Boy insisted, his lower lip trembling.

Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson were trying not to laugh. Harriet looked completely mystified. Mr. Horton was wiping his eyes.

Sunny Boy looked at his mother. She wasn’t even smiling. Her clear, direct gaze met his squarely.

“What’s it for, precious?” she asked quietly. “Tell us why you put it in the lunch. You didn’t know it was stove polish, did you?”

“No, ‘course not,” returned Sunny eagerly, glad to find some one sensible

enough to understand. "I thought it was lic'rish 'cause it smelled so good when I opened the box. An' it was on the shelf, Mother."

"I did that closet in kind of a hurry," admitted Harriet. "I guess plenty of things are not in the right place. And so you thought it was something good to eat, and we could maybe spread it on our bread, did you, Sunny?" Harriet began to laugh. It usually took Harriet a long time to see a joke, and when she did begin to laugh she never stopped very quickly.

The more Harriet laughed, the funnier it seemed. Presently every one, even Sunny Boy, was laughing with her. And by the time they had their laugh out, and had eaten the rest of that picnic lunch, it was time, Mr. Horton said, to think about starting again.

Lucy was at the gate as the car backed out, and she and Mr. Horton and Sunny Boy put

the bars up. She waved them good-by as they rolled down the road.

"She's never seen the ocean," remarked Mrs. Horton. "I've her name and address; she asked me if any one ever wanted somebody to help out down at the Cove this summer to write her."

"If she's saving money for school, she might make some this summer," agreed Aunt Bessie thoughtfully. "We'll remember that."

"Has Sunny Boy ever seen the ocean?" asked Miss Martinson.

"Yes," that small person assured her. "Twice when I don't remember, and twice last year. Mrs. Hadley took us down in the automobile. I went in wading."

Mr. Horton, whose eyes were on the road ahead, suddenly put on his brakes and stopped the automobile.

"Can we help?" he asked.

Sunny Boy had turned in his seat to speak

to Miss Martinson and so had not seen the car ahead of them. Two men were working over the engine, and a lady and a little girl sat in the back.

"We're stumped," said one of the men with a smile. "Been here half an hour."

Mr. Horton jumped out and went over to them.

Sunny Boy, curled up in the seat, smiled vaguely at the little girl, who smiled back. Somewhere, hidden in the trees along the roads, insects were humming. A faint wind rustled the dry, dusty grass. The engine of the other car started chugging with a gay, determined sound. Mr. Horton shook hands with the men and came back to the car.

"Mother," he said carelessly, putting his tools away in the box, "I think some one is going to sleep."

Sunny wondered who was going to sleep, and who was lifting him over the back of the

seat, and whose lap was so soft—and why—and what—and then—

“Well, precious, you’ve had a nice little nap. We’re almost at Nestle Cove. Sit up, and smell the salt in the air,” said Mrs. Horton.

Sunny Boy rubbed his eyes. He had been asleep.

“Harry,” Mrs. Horton leaned forward, and touched her husband’s arm. “There’s a little inn; couldn’t we stop there a minute? We’d like to look half-way presentable when we go through the town. Every one will be out on the porches, you know.”

“And my hair’s a sight,” declared Aunt Bessie positively.

“I *would* like to wash my face,” announced Miss Martinson.

“Old man, what do you want to do?” asked Mr. Horton, turning the car into the pretty white driveway bordered on either side with dazzling white clam shells.

“I could eat,” ventured Sunny Boy cautiously.

“My sentiments exactly,” agreed his father.

“But we’ll have an early supper,” protested Mrs. Horton. “I’d rather you waited, Sunny Boy. The time won’t seem long.”

“Well, but, Mother, couldn’t I have an ice-cream cone?” asked Sunny Boy. “Time is quicker when you have a cone.”

“Yes, Mother,” teased Mr. Horton. “Time is ever so much quicker when we have a cone. Please, Mother?”

Mrs. Horton laughed.

“We’ll all have cones,” she decided. “First we’ll get tidied up, and then we ladies will sit down a minute on this charming front porch and rest, and you and Sunny Boy may bring us the cones.”

So they all went upstairs and a lovely little old lady with red cheeks and white, white

hair, brought them clean towels and warm water, and showed them into a tiny bedroom with pretty chintz curtains and furniture to match.

Sunny was ready first and he came downstairs to find Daddy awaiting him.

"And now we can buy the cones," they both said happily.

"How did you know the kind we liked?" asked Aunt Bessie, when they came up the steps a few minutes later. She and Miss Martinson and Mother were rocking in a nice little row.

"They only had vanilla," answered Sunny Boy, matter-of-factly. "Where's Harriet?"

"She's telephoning for an ice-man," said Mrs. Horton. "Isn't she good, Harry? She wanted us to have ice to-night, and the proprietor of the inn gave her the name of the man in town who sells ice. We'd better

hurry, or we'll find it melting on our front doorstep."

Harriet came out in time to get her ice-cream cone, and then they went back to the automobile again and got in.

"Smell the ocean now?" said Mr. Horton, as he turned the car around. "We're going through the town now, Sunny Boy. You look about and decide what you want to do when I come down again and we come over for a little fun."

Sunny watched with interest. First they went through very clean, straight streets, with small square lawns before the houses—"like little green pocket-handkerchiefs"—Aunt Bessie declared. Nearly every house had a porch, and on every porch were groups of ladies, dressed in white, knitting or sewing or just talking. Children played croquet on the lawns, or sat in swings.

"He has a pail," said Sunny, pointing

to a little bare-footed boy coming up the street swinging a spade and shovel.

“Mercy, isn’t he sunburned!” cried Aunt Bessie. “Sunny Boy, I hope you’ll be more respectful to your nose!”

From the straight, clean streets, the automobile turned into a wider thoroughfare, with nothing but stores on either side.

“I see the ocean!” Sunny Boy stood up in the car and shouted.

Sure enough, if one looked down the street straight ahead there was dark blue water, tossing in the sun.

“There’s where you can buy your pail and shovel,” said Harriet, pointing out a one-story shop with tin pails and shovels hanging up in its doorway.

“See all the children,” said Sunny Boy suddenly. “Are they going to the movies? And oh, look, Daddy!”

“Well, what do you know about that!”

and Mr. Horton slowed down the car in surprise.

“That” was a merry-go-round on a vacant lot next to a brown frame building marked “Post-office.” The organ was playing merrily and the children on the prancing animals waved gayly to Sunny Boy as they spun round. A crowd of youngsters, tickets in hand, stood awaiting their turn.

“Let’s go on it,” suggested Sunny.

“Not this afternoon,” replied his father. “You see, I think we really should get to where we are going first, don’t you? I understand the ice is likely to melt and drown the whole house if we don’t hurry.”

“And it’s five now,” said Mrs. Horton, glancing at the pretty watch on her wrist. “You’ll have plenty of chances to ride this summer, Sunny.”

And when Sunny Boy saw the sea on the other side of the road he quickly forgot the merry-go-round.

Nestle Cove was really divided into three parts. There was the town, through which they had just passed; there was a beautiful stretch of shore road, with the ocean on one side and sand dunes, with dark pines back of them, on the other; and then the road led into the bungalow colony where the cottage Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson had rented stood.

"We're some distance from the town," Aunt Bessie remarked, as they saw the roofs of the bungalows and cottages beginning to appear; "but this is one reason Betty and I liked it. There's a jitney that runs every half hour anyway."

Sunny was watching the waves that ran up the beach almost to the edge of the road, but never quite; always they seemed to think better of it and go rushing back into the sea again.

"I see shells," he remarked, standing up to see better. "An' pebbles and fringe—"

"Seaweed," corrected Mrs. Horton. "Oh, you'll have the best of times, dear. And you'll have Daddy to play with all day to-morrow. Think of that!"

Mr. Horton looked back at Aunt Bessie. "How does one know one's new house?" he inquired seriously.

Aunt Bessie stared, then laughed.

"I haven't the slightest idea how it looks," she confessed. "I've seen it only once, and Betty never has. I think it was shingled and painted green."

"There's the ice-man," said Sunny placidly. "He's going in our house."

And so it proved. Harriet had given the ice-man the address, and he had found the house without a bit of trouble. Aunt Bessie's key fitted the front door, and that was another sign they had found the right house. And before they had taken off their hats, the wife of the owner came in to explain that she had had the windows up all day so that the

place would be cool and airy for them; and then they knew they had the right bungalow.

“Why is it a bungalow?” asked Sunny, out in the small garage at the back of the house, where he had gone to help his father put up the car.

“That’s the name of it,” said Mr. Horton, busy with folding and putting away the robes and curtains.

“Is a bungalow a house?” persisted Sunny.

“Yes,” answered Mr. Horton. “When all the rooms are on one floor, it is called a bungalow. You’ll like sleeping on the first floor, Sunny Boy; we can fall out of the window for an early swim and no one will miss us. And now let’s go in and offer to set the table for supper. Perhaps we can hurry things up.”

CHAPTER VII

A DAY WITH DADDY

AFTER supper that night, Sunny Boy had a dim idea that he would like to go down and look at the ocean "in the dark" as he said. But Mr. Horton announced that he was going to bed and get up early in the morning, so Sunny decided that perhaps after all that was the wiser plan.

As usual, he went to sleep at once and woke up a minute later—or so it seemed to him. The sunlight was very bright and there was a great deal of it in the room. Daddy was nearly dressed, but Mother was still asleep.

"Don't make a noise," whispered Mr. Horton. "I thought we'd have a little

swim, but I guess the bathing suits are in the trunks. They're in the hall and not unlocked yet. We'll go down to the beach and have a little walk before breakfast."

Sunny Boy struggled into his brown linen sailor suit, Daddy helping him with the most stubborn buttons, and together they stole out of the house. Not even Harriet was awake.

"Is it dreadful early?" asked Sunny curiously, and whispering, because he felt so strange.

Mr. Horton laughed.

"It's six o'clock," he answered. "The sun has been up a long time. Some morning you and I must struggle up to see a sunrise, Sunny Boy. Ah, there's the sea. Doesn't it sparkle this morning?"

The little waves were running up and down, just as Sunny Boy had seen them yesterday. He wondered if they had done that all night, and then he knew they had. The

last thing he had heard the night before was the dull roar of the waves as they broke on the sand, and he had heard it that morning, too. The sea, he thought, never rested.

“There’s a little girl, Daddy.” Sunny’s quick eyes had spied a small figure farther down the beach. “What’s she got in her box?”

“You ask her,” suggested Mr. Horton. “She probably lives in one of the cottages, and you’ll want to be friends. Ask her what she is doing.”

They walked down toward the little girl, and when she heard their feet in the sand she turned. She was a pretty child, with big brown eyes and short, curly, brown hair. She smiled at Sunny Boy and her smile showed that several front teeth were missing. This made her lisp when she talked.

“ ‘Lo!’” she said pleasantly. “Are you hunting thells?”

"Is that what you've got in your box?" asked Sunny Boy. "Let me see?"

The little girl held up her box; it was half full of odd shells.

"Ellen! Ellen! Breakfast!" called some one clearly.

"I have to go," announced Ellen hastily. "I'll be out after breakfast. 'Bye."

She ran up the beach as fast as her short legs could carry her, and Sunny Boy and Daddy saw her scramble up the sand and disappear over the road.

"Now she's gone," said Sunny Boy wistfully, "and I wanted to play with her. She's a nice little girl, and I liked her, and I wanted to see the shells she had in that box."

"You'll see her again," said Mr. Horton. "I hope you'll soon know plenty of children to play with. Now we'll take a short walk down this way, and then we must go back and have our own breakfast."

When they went back to the bungalow,

they found the others on the porch looking for them.

“Harriet sounded the gong five minutes ago,” announced Mrs. Horton. “Where were you? Aren’t you hungry? Why didn’t you wake me up?”

“We’ve brought real seashore appetites to breakfast,” answered Mr. Horton. “Sunny Boy and I just went on a scouting trip. We’ve found the bathing beach, and made the acquaintance of Ellen. Sunny, have you said good morning to Miss Martinson?”

“Do you know,” said that little lady, smiling warmly at Sunny Boy, “I think it would be ever so nice if Sunny Boy would call me Aunt Betty. I haven’t a single nephew in this wide world—just two nieces. ‘Miss Martinson’ is such a long name to remember.”

So it was settled that Sunny Boy should have another auntie.

After breakfast Mrs. Horton went to un-

pack the trunks and find the bathing suits. Aunt Bessie and Aunt Betty volunteered to make the beds. Harriet and a big basket took the jitney for town to buy things to eat, and Sunny Boy and Daddy were told to go and amuse themselves till lunch time.

“We’ll surprise them,” declared Mr. Horton, leading the way to the garage. “I have a package they don’t know about and you and I will take it down to the beach and then we’ll see what Mother and the aunties say.”

This mysterious bundle Mr. Horton had spoken of was long and thin and rather heavy. They found it on the floor of the automobile where it had not been noticed because of the many other bundles and luggage they had carried with them.

“What is it, Daddy?” asked Sunny Boy as he took one end and Mr. Horton the other, and they headed for the beach.

“It’s a secret,” was all Daddy would say.

Down on the beach, he laid it in the sand, and, taking out his strong pocket knife, cut the heavy string.

“Why, it’s only umbrellas!” Sunny’s voice sounded disappointed.

Mr. Horton chuckled.

“Yes, but you wait,” he advised. “I open the umbrella so, and I stand it up this way; then I open the other, and I stand it up so, in the sand. And now when Mother and Aunt Bessie and Aunt Betty come down with their fancy-work, they have a fine, shady place to sit and sew.”

“Oh,” said Sunny Boy.

Secretly, he didn’t think those large white canvas umbrellas were very much fun, but when, a little later, his mother and aunts came down to the beach, they were delighted. And before the summer was over Sunny himself had spent many a hot afternoon under their comfortable shade while his mother or Harriet read aloud to him.

After the umbrellas were in position, he and Daddy strolled up the beach. Sunny Boy soon took off his shoes and stockings and then he could walk along the edge of the water and let the waves come up over his feet.

"There's Ellen," he cried presently. "I know, 'cause she has on a yellow dress. And there's a little boy with her. Look, Daddy."

Ellen saw them, and waved her hand.

"'Lo!" she called, running up to them. "This is my brother, Ralph. Are you going bathing?"

"When Mother finds the bathing suits," Sunny assured her. "Come on wading. That's heaps of fun."

Ellen shook her head.

"Can't to-day," she responded briefly. "Yesterday Ralph an' I took our shoes and stockings off after Mother said we shouldn't, and we went in too far and got our best

clothes wet. We can't go wading again for two days."

"Then why not build a sand fort?" suggested Mr. Horton sympathetically. "Three of you can build a fine one. I'll sit right here and keep a look-out for Mother so she won't miss us."

"Yes, that would be fun," agreed Ellen. "Come on, Sunny."

"All right," responded Sunny Boy briefly. "Are you going to play, Ralph?"

"Course. I like to build in the sand."

The three children set to work to build a fort, and as Sunny Boy could go down and scoop up water in Ellen's pail, they had plenty of damp sand to make the walls shape well. They made an elaborate fort with five gates and a high wall, and they were molding soldiers for it when Mrs. Horton and Aunt Bessie came and found them.

"Betty's getting into her bathing suit," Aunt Bessie announced. "Hello, chicks,

you seem to be having a fine time. And Sunny Boy has seven freckles on his nose already."

Aunt Bessie's small nephew tried to look down at his nose to see the seven freckles, of which he was prepared to be rather proud, but, as the nose was very little and, as all noses are, very close to his eyes, he could scarcely see the nose, much less the freckles that might be on it.

Sunny Boy introduced his new friends politely, though they had to tell him their last names.

"Ellen and Ralph Gray," repeated Mrs. Horton. "Then I think you must be the little folk who live in the white house on the street next but one to ours. I met your mother in the embroidery store this morning when I was matching some wool. It is nice you live so near Sunny Boy."

"Is the water cold? Aren't you lazy people going in?" asked Aunt Betty, dancing

before them in her pretty black and white bathing suit. She held her rubber cap in her hand.

“Sunny and I are going,” declared Mr. Horton scrambling to his feet. “Come on, Son, we must get dressed. ’Scuse us, friends.”

Mrs. Horton and Aunt Bessie decided to stay under the umbrellas and knit, and Ellen and Ralph had an errand to do in the town for their mother. So Sunny Boy and Daddy raced each other up to the bungalow and found their bathing suits neatly spread out for them in the built-in bathing houses next to the side porch.

“Can you swim, Daddy?” Sunny Boy asked, struggling with his jersey.

“Yes, indeed,” was the cheerful answer. “You’ll learn this summer, too. I want to teach Mother to drive the car, so I can leave it down here sometimes; and I want to teach you to swim.”

Sunny Boy looked ready for a good time when he finally stood up in his trim little suit. It was dark blue with a red stripe at the neck and wrists. Daddy's was just like it. They took hold of hands and raced down the beach.

"In we go," said Mr. Horton, lifting Sunny Boy high.

Sunny Boy held on tightly and tried not to be afraid. The waves looked very big and fierce when he got out among them, but all about him were people laughing and ducking and having the merriest time.

"You're all right, Son," Daddy's kind voice assured him. "I won't duck you, but I want you to get wet all over, as then the water won't feel cold. Stand up, now, and hold my hand."

He put Sunny Boy down and a great wave broke over them both.

"O-oh!" gasped Sunny Boy, and laughed. He began to splash and paddle around,

though he was careful to keep tight hold of Daddy.

"And now we come out," declared Mr. Horton after ten or fifteen minutes.

"Not yet," teased Sunny. "I like it. And I can't swim, Daddy."

"We're going out now," repeated Mr. Horton firmly. "Mustn't stay in too long the first time. You couldn't learn to swim in one morning, anyway. Run over and speak to Mother a moment if you want to, and then we'll get dressed."

CHAPTER VIII

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

“**S**EE how wet I am, Mother?” Sunny Boy danced up and down before the big umbrella.

“You certainly are!” Mrs. Horton agreed with him. “And it seems to me you’d better run along and get dressed. There comes Aunt Betty—she’s looking for us. Wave your hand, Sunny Boy. And now we’ll all go up to the house; it must be getting near lunch-time.”

Sunny and Daddy were both dressed and “starving to death” they told each other, fifteen minutes before Harriet rang the gong.

“Wasn’t the water fine this morning?” asked Miss Martinson, at the lunch table.

“I was hoping for a chance to duck Sunny Boy, but he never came within reach.”

“Daddy was there, Aunt Betty. I don’t p’sume he’d let you duck me,” replied Sunny Boy.

“Didn’t Daddy duck you?” asked Aunt Betty.

“I don’t know. Did you, Daddy?”

“No, not exactly. Instead of putting you under the water—ducking you—we let the water cover us, heads and all. You see, it would not be very bad to be ducked.”

“What do you say to a drive this afternoon?” said Mr. Horton. “I have to go on the first train in the morning, you know, and until Olive learns to drive the car you’re going to be dependent on the jitneys and trolleys. All in favor of driving down the shore road after lunch, say ‘Aye.’ ”

“Aye!” cried all the grown-ups to Sunny’s astonishment.

"What do you say, Laddie?" his father smiled at him.

"I say 'me,'" declared Sunny Boy firmly. And then those grown-ups had to laugh.

"That settles it," announced Mr. Horton. "We'll keep as close to the beach as we can; and we'll take the field glasses, and perhaps we can sight a coast steamer."

As soon as they were through lunch Mr. Horton brought the car around, and Mrs. Horton, Aunt Bessie and Aunt Betty and Sunny Boy got in, only this time Sunny rode in the back. Mrs. Horton wanted to learn to drive herself, and she meant to watch her husband and see what he did.

Sunny Boy was secretly hoping for another glimpse of the merry-go-round, but they drove in the opposite direction and did not go through the town at all.

"Now you take the wheel," said Mr. Horton, stopping the car on a smooth straight stretch of road.

So Mrs. Horton exchanged seats with him and drove, very slowly and carefully.

“Just as well as Daddy,” Sunny Boy encouraged her. And indeed, before the month was half gone, his mother was able to drive the automobile as well as his father.

She soon tired of the excitement this afternoon, though, and was glad to give it up and come back into the tonneau with Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson. Sunny Boy then slipped into the front seat.

“I see a ship!” he shouted a moment later.

Sure enough, there against the sky they saw the outline of a ship with three funnels, or smokestacks, as Sunny called them.

“The meadow glasses, Mother!” he cried. “Daddy’s meadow glasses to see the ship through!”

“Field glasses,” laughed Aunt Betty.

“Sunny Boy is thinking of the meadows he played in at Brookside farm,” explained Mr. Horton.

Sunny Boy, screwing his eyes to look through the glasses, nodded. Daddy always understood what he meant to say.

"I see men on it," he announced.

Then every one looked and saw the sailors walking about the decks of the vessel.

Sunny Boy was much interested, and as Daddy drove on he asked a great many questions about the sea and ships. He rather thought he should like to be a sailor when he grew up. Either that, or an aviator.

Hm'm, hm'm—buz-zz. A great droning sounded back of them.

"Mother, Mother, Mother!" Sunny Boy shouted at the top of his lungs. "It's an airplane!"

It was, too; a beautiful, graceful, swift airplane that came out of the sky and sped over them and was gone almost before they knew it.

"You'll see ever so many of them this summer," Mr. Horton said, when his family

were sitting down properly in their places again. You know how every one stands up and tilts his head backward to watch an airplane.

That was the end of adventures for that afternoon, though they drove several miles further along the road that followed the line of the beach closely. They got back to the bungalow just in time to freshen up a little before Harriet announced that dinner was ready.

“What are we going to do to-night?” Sunny Boy asked pleasantly, playing that a piece of bread was a fish and his spoon a net.

Daddy laughed.

“Why, I think you’re going to bed,” he answered, gazing intently at the bowl before Sunny Boy and the spoon which threatened to spatter milk presently. “I may take Mother down to the beach to see the moon a little later, but we are all going to bed early.

I have to go back to the city early, you know."

"I wish—" said Sunny Boy earnestly. "I wish you would stay and play with me all the time, Daddy—Oh, my!"

For the spoon had slipped and a great splash of milk went on Harriet's spandy tablecloth.

"That's a two-cent spot, isn't it, Mother?" asked Sunny Boy sadly.

But Mother shook her head.

"We'll not begin to count till to-morrow," she said kindly. "Only, do remember what I've told you about playing with your food, Sunny Boy."

You see, Mother and Sunny Boy had decided that when a boy was five years old and came to the table just like other folks, he shouldn't make any more crumbs about his chair, or spill any food on the tablecloth. If he went a whole week without getting a spot on the cloth, Mother put ten cents in

his Christmas bank; and for every spot he had to pay a little fine. That is, he had to give up a part of the ten cents he would otherwise have earned.

“Great big splashy spots are two cents,” Sunny Boy explained to Aunt Betty, who had not heard of the plan. “Little spicky spots are only half a cent. And things that you can’t help spilling—like huckleberries and blackberries and cranberry sauce—don’t count at all.”

After supper Sunny Boy was so tired and sleepy that, although he said he wanted to go down on the beach and see the moon, he knew in his own mind he’d go to sleep walking there; and he stumbled down the hall and into his pretty bedroom and went to sleep on the bed without even taking off his shoes.

Daddy undressed him, only waking him as he kissed him good-night.

“I may be gone before you’re awake, Lad-

die," he whispered. "But you know I'm coming down next Saturday, and we'll have great times. You're the man of the house while I'm away, remember."

"All right," sighed Sunny Boy drowsily.

In the morning he remembered and jumped out of bed to find Daddy and love him a little more before he should hurry away to catch his train.

"He's gone, precious," was Mrs. Horton's greeting when he pushed back the curtain that hung between the two rooms. "Come and get into bed with me a minute. Daddy was off at five o'clock this morning. Breakfast? Yes, I made him nice hot coffee and toast. And now I smell Harriet's bacon. You and I had better hurry."

While they were eating breakfast, a small nose was flattened against the dining-room screen door.

"Is Sunny Boy there?" asked a voice. "Can he come out and play? My cousin

from Fenner is visiting us an' we want to build a fort."

"It's Ellen," said Sunny Boy. "Could I be 'scused, Mother? I ate all my oatmeal an' everything."

"Where are you going to be?" asked Mrs. Horton, smiling at Ellen. "When we come down on the beach a little later we want to be able to find you. And Sunny Boy mustn't go in the water unless an older person is around."

"No'm," agreed Ellen obediently. "We can't go in either, not till to-morrow. Not even wading. We'll play down at the edge of the old pier. My mother is coming, too, by and by and she doesn't like to hunt for us, so we promised to stay right there."

"All right then," said Mrs. Horton. "Run along, Son. I'm sorry you haven't a shovel, but a clam shell answers very well. The first time I go into town I'll get you a pail and shovel."

Sunny Boy found Ellen and Ralph and the cousin from Fenner awaiting him on the sidewalk. The cousin was another boy, a freckle-faced youngster with merry blue eyes and red hair.

"I'm going to help build it," Ellen said, as the four walked down toward the beach. "Always an' always I just have to carry things and sit on things to keep 'em from blowing away, and this time I want to build."

"All right, you may," promised her brother. "First we have to find Sunny a clam shell to dig with."

The others were carrying pails and shovels, and Ellen had also a set of sand dishes with which she could, as she explained to Sunny Boy, make wonderful cakes and pies.

"Wet sand is the best," she informed him, "but we'll have to get along with dry till your mother comes down. Then you and

Stephen can go wading and get us some water."

Stephen was the cousin's name.

As they climbed over the sand dunes and came out on the shining sandy beach, a big black and white spotted dog came running up to them.

"Hello, Queen!" said Ellen, putting her arms around the dog's neck. "Have you had any breakfast, dear?"

CHAPTER IX

THE FORT BUILDERS

“**I**S that your dog?” Sunny Boy asked Ellen curiously.

“She isn’t anybody’s dog,” declared Ellen seriously. “At least, not really. Queen did belong to Dr. Maynard over in the town, but she learned to ride on the trolley cars, and now she won’t stay at home. Every summer she’s down on the beach all day, playing.”

“But dogs get hungry,” protested Sunny. “An’ where can she sleep?”

“She sleeps most anywhere,” said Ellen, who was spending her third summer in Nestle Cove and really knew Queen very well indeed. “Sometimes she sleeps on our front

porch. And my mother always feeds her if she acts hungry. All the people in the cottages know Queen."

"Here's a shell for you, Sunny," announced Ralph, who had been running up the beach looking for one. "Let's start the fort right here in this corner. You mark how it goes, Stephen."

Stephen knew all about forts. He had a big brother who was an officer in the regular army, and he lived in forts, just as more ordinary people live in houses.

"First you have a wall," said Stephen. "You can begin on that, Ellen. Oh, 'way off! There, that's about right. And Sunny Boy and Ralph and me will make a great big fort, big enough to get into."

To measure the height of their fort, they used one of the old pilings left from the pier that had burned and had never been rebuilt, and then they began to heap up the sand. If Stephen had only known it, what they

were building looked far more like an Eskimo's hut than it did a fort, but that didn't matter as long as the builders were satisfied.

"Now what do you think of that?" Stephen stood off to admire their work. "I wish Aunt Hallie would hurry up and come and see it."

"Isn't the wall nice?" asked Ellen, who had been working every minute to finish her part of the task. "It's just as smooth! Feel, Stephen."

"Yes, that's great," approved Stephen. "Want to see how it looks inside, Sunny? Stoop down, and don't hit your head anywhere, or you'll knock it down."

Sunny Boy crawled carefully through the doorway of the fort. It was hollowed out inside to make a little room. He was half way in and half way out when he heard Ellen exclaim: "Look what Queen has in her mouth! Do you suppose she got it out of the water?"



Sunny Boy crawled carefully through the doorway of the
fort

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Sunny was curious to know what Queen had, and he attempted to back out hastily to see. He forgot that the doorway wasn't very high, and when he stood up, bump! went his yellow head, and down about him tumbled the sand fort.

"Now you've done it!" scolded Stephen, as Sunny Boy's feet waved wildly in the air. "Hurry up and dig, Ralph, he'll choke!"

Ralph and Ellen dug frantically with clam shells and spades, but they had dug a deeper hole than they knew, and Sunny Boy was really buried under a heavy load of sand.

"Take the pail," ordered Stephen, who was older than Ralph or Ellen, and able to realize that Sunny Boy might be in danger. "Ellen, you go and get—" Stephen shaded his eyes with his hand and looked up the beach. "You go and get the life-saver's rake," he told her.

Every morning, when the life-savers

cleaned up the beach, they used long-handled wooden rakes. Usually they put these away in lockers under the pier, but Stephen's quick eyes had seen a rake left out to-day and thrust carelessly under the piling. The two life-savers were far out beyond the breakers now, in a rowboat, watching the bathers.

"I got it!" Ellen came racing back with the rake. "Let me rake Sunny out, Stephen."

"You're too little. Let go," said Stephen. He began to claw at the sand fort vigorously.

"Here come Mother and Mrs. Horton," announced Ellen, just as Stephen and Ralph together succeeded in uncovering Sunny Boy.

Sunny Boy sat up, rather frightened and extremely uncomfortable. There was sand in his yellow hair, sand in his eyes, and sand in his mouth.

“Ugh!” he spluttered. “Ugh! I couldn’t see a thing. I couldn’t even breathe!”

“Why, Sunny Boy, what happened to you?” asked his mother wonderingly. “This is Ellen and Ralph’s mother, dear.”

Mrs. Gray smiled down at Sunny. She was very tall and had gray hair. Sunny Boy held out his hand to her.

“You got rather the worst of it, didn’t you?” she said to him. “I think you must have pulled the sand house down upon you. But a swim will fix you up. Your mother tells me you are going in to-day.”

“Aunt Bessie is waiting for you at the house,” Mrs. Horton told Sunny Boy. “She and Aunt Betty are going in bathing this morning. They’ll look after you. I mean to sit here and sew with Mrs. Gray and watch you.”

Sunny Boy turned to trot off to the bungalow, but came back.

"What did Queen have?" he asked curiously.

"An orange," answered Ellen promptly. "I guess she stole it from some one's lunch box."

Aunt Bessie was sitting on the porch knitting, a raincoat thrown over her bathing suit.

"I'm going in swimming with you, Aunt Bessie. Sha'n't we have fun? Where's my bathing suit?" cried the excited Sunny Boy.

"Your mother left your suit in the house to the left," she informed her nephew. "Want any help, dear?"

"I can undress all right," Sunny Boy reminded her reproachfully. "I don't take time 'cept when I'm getting dressed."

Aunt Betty, it seemed, could "swim like a fish" as Aunt Bessie admiringly admitted.

"Let her hold you, Sunny Boy," she urged her little nephew. "You'll learn to swim right away if you're not afraid."

Sunny Boy wasn't afraid, not the least bit. Aunt Betty said she would teach him how to float first, and she carried him out to where the water was smoother and put him on his back just as though she were putting him down on his own soft bed.

"Just keep your head up a bit," she told him. "Never mind if the water does come over your chin—there. I won't let go, I'm holding you firmly, dear. Now isn't that fun?"

Sunny Boy agreed that it was. He tried floating several times, and then Aunt Betty carried him back to the beach and he sat down comfortably and let the waves roll over him.

"You're having a beautiful time," said Mother's voice behind him. She had come up and he had not heard her footsteps in the soft sand. "I want you to go in and get dressed now, dear. Why, you're getting sunburned already."

Sunny Boy did not want to go in. He wanted to stay and play longer in the water. He scuffed his bare feet impatiently, and a little frown grew on his forehead.

"Why, Sunny Boy!" Mother's voice was distinctly surprised. "Here Daddy left you to look after me, and you make a fuss the very first thing I ask you to do. What do you suppose he would say to that?"

"I'm going," announced Sunny Boy, scrambling to his feet. "I'm going this minute, Mother. Can I have a cracker?"

"May I have a cracker?" "corrected Mrs. Horton. "Well, just one. We're going to have an early lunch."

"All right. Then I'll tell Harriet just one cracker."

Sunny Boy ran over the hot sand, up to the bathhouse, and rubbed so hard with the rough towels that he was as dry and clean as could be in the shortest possible time.

He put on his sailor suit and went to his room to brush his hair.

“Mother says I may have one cracker, please,” he reported to Harriet, whom he found setting the table in the dining-room.

“ ‘Tis a pink nose, you have,” Harriet told him frankly. “Never mind, you’ll be brown as a berry before your father comes down Saturday. Here’s your cracker now.”

Sunny Boy ran down again to the beach and had time to help Ellen and Ralph build a schoolhouse in the sand before Mrs. Horton and the two aunts—for Aunt Betty had not stayed in the water many minutes after Sunny Boy came out—gathered up their magazines and sewing and started back to the bungalow for lunch.

“Sunny Boy,” said Mother at the table—and, by the way, Sunny Boy sat in Daddy’s place when he wasn’t there and tried his best to behave as the man of the house should—“if you take a nap this afternoon, you may

sit up to-night for a couple of hours and go with us down on the beach."

Now, Sunny Boy was not fond of taking naps, and since his fifth birthday he had been gradually skipping them, since Mother thought that if a laddie went to bed early every night and was not cross during the day he might manage nicely without sleeping in the afternoon. A cross boy needed a nap—that was what Mother always said.

"Well, Mother," answered Sunny slowly, "I don't feel sleepy—I don't suppose I could go 'less I took a nap?"

"No, indeed," answered Mother. "No nap means you go to bed at a quarter of seven as usual."

"All right," agreed Sunny Boy, with a long breath. "I'll go and take a nap."

He went into his room very much like a soldier going to war. We're sorry to say he kicked off his shoes—one of them went

flying across the pretty room and landed on a chair and the other went under the bed. Then, dressed as he was, Sunny flung himself on the bed.

“Can’t go to sleep right in the day-time,” he grumbled to himself. “I’ll bet Ralph doesn’t take naps.”

But Sunny Boy didn’t know that plenty of salt air and an ocean bath and much running about on a sandy beach can make a small boy sleepy even against his will; in the middle of a big yawn, Sunny went to sleep.

When he woke, he heard his mother moving about in the next room. He felt hot and uncomfortable, the way one feels, you know, when the eyes first open after a nap. When you’re a baby you cry, but when you are older, if you don’t watch out, you’re cross. Sunny Boy felt cross.

“Hello!” his mother lifted the door cur-

tain and smiled at him. "I heard you turn over, dear. Supper will be ready in a few minutes."

Sunny Boy sat up in bed.

"Supper!" he echoed. "Why, Mother, is it night?"

"It's nearly six," Mrs. Horton told him. "You've had a fine long nap. Now I'll help you wash, dear, and when you get into a fresh suit you'll begin to feel happier. And then I'll tell you what fun we are going to have to-night."

CHAPTER X

THE MARSHMALLOW ROAST

“**T**ELL me now,” urged Sunny Boy, sitting down on the floor to put on clean white socks. “Is Daddy coming?”

“I wish he were,” said Mrs. Horton quickly. “No, precious, we’ll have to wait till Saturday for that. This is Aunt Bessie’s plan, and we’ll let her explain it. There! slip on the tan sailor suit and I’ll tie your tie, and then we shall be ready.”

Sunny Boy, looking as shining and neat as a brand new pin, rushed ahead of Mother to find Aunt Bessie. She was in the porch swing, and just as he reached her, Harriet rang the gong for supper.

“Hurry up, Auntie,” implored Sunny. “Mother says we are going to have fun to-

night. What is it? May I go? Is Harriet going?"

Aunt Bessie smiled.

"Of course you are going," she assured him. "Didn't you take a nap so you could go to this party? We're going to build a fire down on the beach and toast marshmallows. What do you think of that?"

Sunny thought it sounded delightful.

"But Harriet's toaster is broken," he said doubtfully. "She can't use it, can she, Mother? Did you buy a new one, Auntie?"

"You wait till you see how we'll do it," answered Aunt Bessie gaily. "We'll find a way. Harriet is going to the movies in town to-night, and we'll toast our own marshmallows over our own fire. My goodness, Olive, I never thought of the fire! Can we find enough dry wood?"

Mrs. Horton was sure there would be enough wood on the beach.

“Maybe Queen will come,” suggested Sunny Boy, who had grown very fond of the wise, friendly dog. “I should think she’d be lonesome at night.”

“We’ll ask her to the marshmallow roast,” said Aunt Bessie kindly.

Soon after supper they all went down to the beach, Aunt Bessie carrying a box of marshmallows, and Sunny the safety matches. Mrs. Horton and Miss Martinson brought a rug to spread on the sand.

“Let’s go up a way,” suggested Aunt Bessie, as they reached the sand. “There’s a fine smooth stretch around that bend, and we can sit and watch the water till it is darker.”

They found a place where the sand was dry but not too powdery, and Mrs. Horton spread out the rug. For a little while no one spoke, and Sunny Boy, his elbow in Mother’s lap, was content to count the waves coming in and running back again as they did forever and forever.

“Now look,” whispered Mother presently. Away out to sea, apparently, a silver disc was rising. They could see it grow larger and larger.

“It’s the moon,” said Sunny Boy.

“And now we’ll build our fire,” announced Aunt Bessie, rising. “I’ve had my eye on that driftwood over there for the last half hour. Sunny Boy and I will get it.”

Sunny Boy and Aunt Bessie carried over the wood, which proved to be light, dry pieces and was once, Aunt Bessie said, probably orange crates on some fruit steamer.

“Now we fold the paper under so,” said Auntie, when the wood was ready. “You may light it, Sunny Boy. Stand back, dear. There! isn’t that a splendid blaze? Oh, no, we don’t toast the marshmallows yet! We have to wait for the fire to burn down to red-hot coals. You watch.”

Sunny Boy watched.

"I think," he said politely, "the fire's going out."

Aunt Bessie looked and laughed.

"I think it is, too," she admitted.
"Maybe we didn't use enough paper."

"Let me try," said Mrs. Horton.

She folded more paper, arranged the wood, and touched a match to the pile. The flames shot up, and in a moment or so they heard the crackling that told them the wood had caught and would burn.

"Mother can do it," said Sunny Boy proudly. "Where's the pan, Aunt Bessie?"

"Oh, lambie, we don't want a pan," protested Aunt Bessie. "See these nice, clean sticks I've saved? Well, we put a marshmallow on the end, so—and hold it out to the blaze, so—and then when it begins to brown we eat it—so!" and Aunt Bessie held out a delicious, creamy brown marshmallow to the interested Sunny Boy.

"Now let me try," said Sunny Boy.

“And the first one shall be for Aunt Bessie,
’cause it’s her party.”

Sunny Boy put his marshmallow carefully on the pointed end of the stick, then held it out over the fire. But poor Sunny Boy held the candy too near the glowing coals, and it was burnt to a crisp.

“Oh!”

“Never mind, Sunny Boy,” said Mother. “The next one will be all right. We don’t often get anything just right the first time.”

And the next one was plump and brown, and Aunt Bessie said it tasted delicious.

“Where do you suppose Queen is?” asked Sunny Boy, toasting a particularly fat marshmallow for his mother. “Maybe the fire scares her.”

“No, I’ll tell you,” said Miss Martinson, pulling Sunny Boy back a little from the fire. “I think Queen must have gone home with some of the children to spend the night. She’s getting old, you know, and I dare say

the sand feels damp to her after the sun goes down."

Whatever the reason, no Queen was seen by Sunny Boy that night. He saved two candies for the dog in case she did come, but at last he had to eat them himself.

They toasted marshmallows till all declared that not another one could they eat, and then they covered the fire with sand. Not for worlds would Sunny Boy have said a word about being sleepy, but he had yawned several times when he thought no one saw him, and he was secretly glad when Mother announced that they must go home.

"I like staying up," he declared, trotting along beside her through the soft sand, while Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson walked ahead. "If I took a nap every day could I always stay up?"

"Oh, that wouldn't be a good plan at all," replied Mother seriously. "All the naps you might take wouldn't make up for the

sleep you lost. You'll have years of nights to play and work in when you grow up, precious. Nights were made for little boys to sleep in so they'll grow up big and strong."

After they reached the bungalow, Mrs. Horton went in with Sunny and helped him get ready for bed. After she had gone again, he lay for a little while listening to the roar of the waves as they broke on the beach and watching the shadows the moonlight made in the room before he went to sleep.

"I have to go into town to do a bit of marketing," Harriet informed him the next day when after breakfast he wandered out into her kitchen and proceeded to poke his yellow head into the pantry. "Sunny Boy, you know your mother doesn't like to have you help yourself to food. What are you doing in there?"

"Just lookin'," answered Sunny amiably.

"Well, stop it," said Harriet, pouring

cream into her coffee. Harriet was eating her breakfast. "As I said, I'm going to town, and if you want to go with me in the jitney—"

Sunny Boy bounced out of the pantry.

"Take me with you," he begged.

"You go and ask your mother if she is willing," replied Harriet. "I'm going right away without stopping to wash the dishes. And we have to hurry back because I want to wash windows this morning. Hurry, now."

Sunny Boy hurried. Mother was willing, he reported in a few minutes, and he and Harriet started a quarter of an hour later. They caught a jitney without trouble, and ten minutes' ride brought them to the town. Harriet brushed by all the interesting shops, and even the merry-go-round, and took Sunny to the butcher's shop. He didn't care about a butcher shop—he saw plenty of those at home.

"Let's go on the merry-go-round," he suggested, when Harriet had her package in the large bag she carried and was on the way to the grocer's store. "And I haven't had a soda for ever and ever so long, Harriet."

"Well, Sunny Boy, I haven't a minute," explained Harriet kindly. "There's all the work waiting for me at the house. But I suppose if you don't get a ride on that contraption—if I take you for just one will you promise not to tease for another?"

Sunny Boy promised, and they had an all-too-short, thrilling, whirling ride, Sunny mounted on a camel and Harriet dizzily perched on a giraffe. Then they stopped in the grocer's and bought some lettuce and had to hurry for a jitney, because they only ran every twenty minutes, and if you missed one it meant a long wait.

"What big clouds," said Sunny Boy, kneeling on the seat to look out of the jitney window.

"They look like thunder clouds," commented Harriet. "I shouldn't be surprised if we had a storm this afternoon. Our street is next, Sunny. You pay the man and tell him to stop."

Ellen and Ralph and Stephen, lined up in a little row, waited for Sunny at his top doorstep. They wanted him to come down and go in wading, they said.

"Your mother said it would be all right, 'cause my mother is on the beach. She has her knitting," said Ellen. "Let's hurry 'fore it gets any hotter."

CHAPTER XI

SUNNY BOY TO THE RESCUE

THE sun was very hot on the beach, so hot that Mrs. Gray declared that she was fairly baked under her umbrella and that she did not see how the children stood the direct rays.

“Queen is hot, too,” said Sunny Boy pityingly.

The dog lay and panted, her red tongue hanging out, too warm and uncomfortable to do more than feebly wag her tail when one of the children patted her.

The ocean was crowded with bathers, trying to get cool, and Aunt Bessie, Miss Martinson, and Sunny’s mother came up to them presently, their bathing suits dripping.

"It feels so much like a thunderstorm, that we're going up to the house and dress," said Mrs. Horton. "No one but a Hottentot or a youngster could stand the sun to-day. The clouds look threatening off there. Does Nestle Cove have very severe storms?"

"Pretty heavy sometimes," admitted Mrs. Gray, knitting steadily. "I remember last year we had one that crippled the electric light service. I'll send Sunny Boy up in an hour or so, shall I? Or may we keep him to lunch? The children would love to have him."

"I'm nervous in a storm," confessed Mrs. Horton. "I think I'd feel better if he were with me. Don't let him stay out much past noon."

So when the town whistle blew the long shrill blast that meant twelve o'clock, Mrs. Gray gathered up her knitting and signaled to the four children down at the water's edge.

"You're just as tanned!" said Stephen to Sunny Boy, as they began to put on their shoes and stockings.

Indeed, Sunny Boy's face and hands and legs were a soft, even brown now, and his nose was brown with little gold freckles powdered generously over it.

"Whee! see the clouds," shouted Ralph, pointing inland. "Don't they look like castles and mountains, Mother?"

"Or snow pudding," said Ellen.

"My, what a big snow pudding!" and Sunny Boy giggled at the thought.

"Don't dawdle, children," warned Mrs. Gray. "I heard thunder a few minutes ago. We left all the windows up, you know. Ready, Sunny Boy? Then we'll start."

Harriet had luncheon ready when Sunny Boy reached home, and while they were eating a violent peal of thunder rumbled overhead. Before the dessert was served the sun had gone out and thick black clouds were

hurrying through the sky. All the blue had gone out of the sea, and it was a sullen gray with white-caps showing far out.

"It's a regular gale," announced Harriet breathlessly. She had been out to get her dish-towels that had been flapping in the wind. "I never saw a sky change so quickly. Shall I put the windows down, Mrs. Horton?"

"Yes," answered Sunny's mother. "It is beginning to rain. Come, folks, let's go into the living-room and watch."

The living-room had a big window that gave a glimpse of the ocean, though the bungalow faced the street. There was a fine deep window seat heaped high with cushions, and Sunny Boy took one of these and put it in a chair behind his mother's back, as he had seen his Daddy do.

"Thank you, dearest," she said. "Sit on the arm of my chair and we'll both be comfortable. Bessie, tell Harriet to come in.

Never mind the dishes, they can wait."

So Harriet came in, and she and Miss Martinson sat on the window seat, though Aunt Bessie and Sunny Boy and Mother preferred to be a little further back.

Zip! a great jagged streak of lightning split the black sky.

"I guess that struck a wave!" gasped Sunny Boy, as a tremendous clap of thunder followed.

"More like a house," returned Harriet. "I'm glad the telephone is in the other room."

"Nonsense," Mrs. Horton was beginning, when there was a sharp crackling noise in the dining-room, a flash, and a smell as of rubber burning.

"What was it?" asked Mrs. Horton.

"Fuse burned out," explained Aunt Bessie, who had run to see. "That's a common occurrence in the country and out-of-the-way places like this. Listen to that!"

A great blaze of lightning showed them the street—"light as day," Sunny said—and then a sheet of water blown by the wind rattled against the house and windows.

"Will it wreck ships?" asked Sunny Boy.

"We'll hope not, precious," returned Mother, hugging him. "Often when there is a storm on shore it is calm a few miles out at sea. But there will be a high tide and rough water for a couple of days, I'm afraid. You'll see driftwood on the beach to-morrow."

"I wonder what Queen does when it rains," speculated Sunny, his thoughts turning to the friendly dog who roamed the sand and never seemed to have a home.

"I think Queen goes under a pier and stays till the storm is over," said Miss Martinson. "And I think the worst of this storm is passed now. What is it, Harriet?"

"I can't make out what it is," said Har-

riet, her voice puzzled. "I guess it is alive, but it doesn't move—"

Sunny Boy slipped down from the arm of his mother's chair and ran over to the window. He flattened his nose against the rain-spattered glass and peered out. Then, without a word to any one, he ran from the room.

"Sunny! Sunny Boy! where are you going?" called Mrs. Horton.

"That crazy child's gone right out into the rain," cried Harriet, running to the front door. The others followed her.

Sunny Boy was out in the middle of the street, bending over a little object that lay in the road. As his mother reached the door he picked it up and came running back, his eyes shining, the water dripping from his yellow hair.

"It's alive, Mother!" he shouted. "Do you s'pose the lightning struck it?"

"Sunny Boy!" said Mrs. Horton drawing

him in and closing the door, while a peal of thunder rattled the windows again, "what made you run out in the storm like that?"

"Why, it's a dog," explained Sunny Boy, wide-eyed. "A little dog, Mother, and it was right in the middle of the street. An automobile might run right over it and never see it."

"Bring it out into the kitchen, the poor thing," said Harriet. "I noticed it ten minutes ago, but I couldn't make out whether 'twas a bundle of rags or something alive. Here, I'll turn on the light. Let's see what kind of dog you've got."

Sunny Boy put the dog into the apron Harriet held out. Two big brown eyes looked out from a tangled mass of silky hair that should have been white, but was now spotted and streaked with red mud, and a curly tail wagged gently.

"Why, it's a little beauty!" exclaimed Aunt Bessie. "Poor thing, it's so cold it's

about exhausted. Some one's pet I suppose, and these house dogs can't stand exposure. What shall we feed it?"

"Warm milk, wouldn't you, Harriet?" asked Mrs. Horton. "And then, if it drinks it, we'll put it in a box with a bit of clean flannel over it and let it sleep. I don't believe it is much more than a puppy."

Soon the little dog had gratefully lapped up the warm milk Harriet brought it, and had been put in a comfortable box and warmly covered. The storm was quite over, and the sun was shining out again.

"Can we keep him?" asked Sunny Boy, changing his shoes which had got wet in his trip to rescue the dog. "May I have him to play with, Mother?"

"Why, dear, it is in all likelihood some one's pet," explained Mrs. Horton. "If you lost your pet dog, think how you would feel till you found it. We must make inquiry among the cottages to find if any one

has lost a dog, and we'll pin a notice up on the post-office bulletin, too. I don't want you to get too attached to the dog, for I am sure its owner will soon claim it. But, of course, till that happens, you may play with it as much as you like."

Sunny Boy went down to the beach before supper and found that the storm had carried away part of the fishing pier. The waves were higher than usual and the wet sand made walking difficult. He met Ralph and told him about the dog.

"He can play with Queen," Ralph suggested. "What are you going to call him?"

Sunny Boy had not thought of naming the dog, because he thought of course it was already named by the person who had lost it. But Ralph did not agree, and said:

"The dog can't talk and tell you who he is. He needs a name as much as ever, and I think, Sunny, that you should give him a name to go by till his own is learned."

"All right then, call him Curly," suggested Sunny Boy. "He has long, curly hair. Mother says she is going to wash him, and then he'll be pure white. Maybe she will let him sleep with me."

But Mrs. Horton, questioned on the subject that night, did not approve of dogs sleeping on nice, white beds.

"If you want him to, Curly may sleep on a rug in your room," she told Sunny Boy. "But not on the bed. If you allow him to jump up, he'll have to go and sleep in his box in the kitchen."

Curly proved to be a very popular addition to the family. Although Mrs. Horton asked nearly every one she met, and wrote out a description of Curly and pinned it on the lost-and-found bulletin in the Nestle Cove post-office, no one claimed the dog. When Mr. Horton came down the next Saturday and took them all out driving, Curly

perched on Sunny's lap in the front seat and very plainly enjoyed the trip.

"He's used to riding in a car," said Mr. Horton. "I wonder why no one advertises for him or tries to find him."

"Maybe I can keep him always," said Sunny hopefully. "He can sit up, Daddy, and beg, and play dead. I think he's a very educated dog."

CHAPTER XII

SUNNY BOY IS NAUGHTY

CURLY proved to be a happy-natured little dog, and was soon a great favorite with all the children who played on the beach.

"I wish I had one just like him," said Ellen.

"I'd rather have a bigger dog," said Ralph. "One, maybe, as big as Queen."

"Oh," declared Sunny Boy, "no other dog could be as nice as Curly! Though Queen is nice, too, and I like her awful much," he added, feeling that if Queen could know what he had just said her feelings might be hurt.

At first Sunny Boy had an uneasy feeling

that the dog might be claimed any day, but as two weeks went by and no one came to look for a lost bow-wow, this feeling gradually vanished entirely. "Curly" was, in Sunny's mind, his own dog.

"I wish I had something to do," sighed Sunny Boy one warm morning.

"Find Ellen and Ralph and play with them," suggested Mrs. Horton promptly. She was sitting in the porch swing, mending. Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson had gone up to the city to shop.

"Their father took 'em sailing," Sunny Boy explained disconsolately, referring to Ellen and Ralph. "I wish Daddy stayed here all the time. We could go fishing, too."

"Well, you know what Daddy would say if he were here about little boys who are always wishing for what they have not," said Mrs. Horton, rummaging in her stocking bag for tan cotton to darn a huge hole in one of

Sunny's socks. "You've ever so many pleasant things to do, dear. Don't sit there and grumble."

"I can't do anything at all!" Sunny Boy was in a perverse mood. "I can't go swimming, 'less some one is there watching me. And I can't drive the car, 'cause nobody will teach me. An' you sew all the time and don't 'muse me at all!"

Sunny Boy felt so sorry for himself that two big tears ran out of his blue eyes and splashed down on Curly, asleep in his lap.

"Why Arthur Horton!" Mother's voice was gentle. "That doesn't sound like my little Sunny Boy. Who ever heard of amusing a laddie with a dog to romp with and the whole beautiful seashore for a playground? You and Curly run down to the beach now, and see if you can't find some more of those shells Aunt Bessie is saving to make into souvenirs. And this afternoon we'll go to meet their train with the car."

"I don't want to hunt shells," grumbled Sunny Boy, kicking his feet against the step.

"You'll have to go to your room and stay till lunch time if you can't find something pleasant to do," said Mrs. Horton firmly. She did not look at Sunny Boy at all, but at her darning.

Sunny Boy felt as cross as two sticks. He didn't know why, and perhaps there wasn't any reason. If you had asked him, he would have said that every one was mean to him.

Mother continued to sew steadily. Suddenly a mischievous idea popped into Sunny's mind. He put down Curly and ran to his own room. When he came out he went out of the house the back way, and slammed the screen-door without speaking to Harriet, who was busy ironing. You know, don't you, how it does relieve your feelings to slam doors? Well, Sunny Boy, who was really as bad as he could be that morning, felt better directly. He even

tried to whistle as he went down the street.

He knew exactly what he was going to do. He was going to town and ride on the merry-go-round and have an ice-cream cone. They had been in Nestle Cove over three weeks, and he had been to town only that once with Harriet.

“All the other children go,” Sunny Boy said to himself, hailing the rattling old jitney as it came past the corner. He had taken good care to walk two blocks down the road so that no one from his house could see him.

He had a pocketful of pennies that jingled merrily. Daddy on his last visit had added to the store in the pasteboard box that stood on Sunny’s bureau, and Mother and the aunties often dropped pennies in, too. Sunny Boy was sure he had enough money to go to the city with, had he wished to go.

“Goin’ far?” the jitney driver asked.

There were only three other passengers in his bus.

“To town,” Sunny assured him cheerfully. “Is the merry-go-round running yet?”

“Well, ’tis, if it didn’t burn down last night,” said the jitney driver. “I was over that way ’bout ten o’clock, and she sure was crowded.”

The jitney bus went only as far as the post-office, and Sunny paid his fare there, counting out the five pennies slowly, and jumped down. He remembered where the merry-go-round was, and if he had not, the music would have led him to it.

“What are you going on?” asked a boy slightly older than Sunny, as they stood watching the whirling figures and waiting for the thing to stop. “I’ve been on everything ’cept the tigers, an’ this time I’m going on one of ’em.”

“I’d like a zebra,” announced Sunny Boy

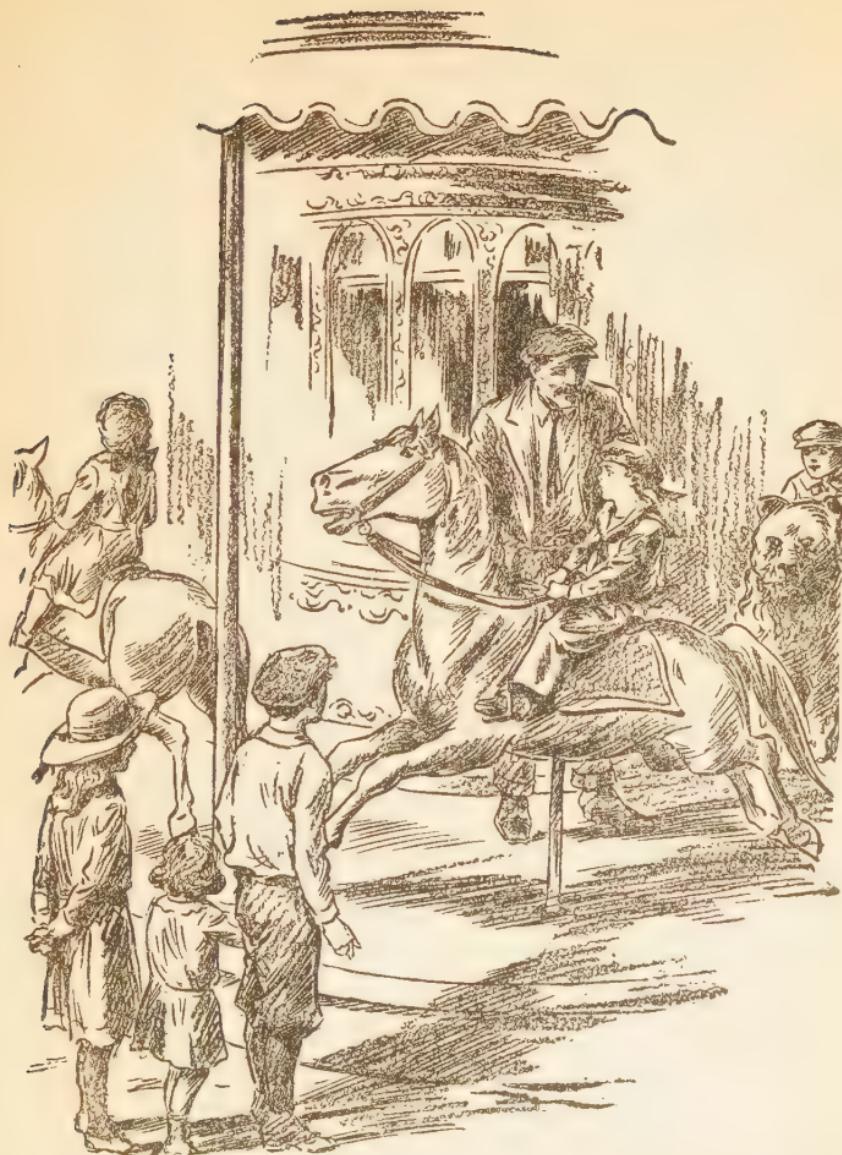
shyly. "Or maybe a horse—they go up and down, don't they?"

"Well, if you've money enough, buy two tickets and you can stay right on for two rides," advised his new friend. "Let's see. Oh, yes, you can buy two. More than two at a time is apt to make you dizzy. Look, she's going to stop!"

The merry-go-round did stop with a dismal groan, and Sunny Boy scrambled on with a crowd of eager children. Most of them had mothers or older brothers and sisters with them, and when the attendant came to Sunny Boy and lifted him up, he seemed inclined to stay there and hold him on.

"I won't fall off," urged Sunny with dignity.

"Then you'll have to be strapped on," said the man, smiling. "Can't have you flying into space when your frisky steed gets to going, you know. There! now you're safe, and no one will notice that belt."



Sunny Boy's horse went up and down—in time to the music
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After the first ride the man came and unbuckled the belt, and, when Sunny Boy showed his second ticket, lifted him down and up again on a cream-colored horse. He fastened the belt snugly about him, and the merry-go-round started gayly. Sunny Boy's horse went up and down—in time to the music it seemed to him—and he was very happy.

When the music stopped and the platform was still, the attendant came and lifted him down. The floor wobbled under Sunny Boy's feet and he felt a bit shaky, but as he walked away he was all right again.

Across the street from the merry-go-round was a large open booth where soda water was sold. There were people sitting at all four sides of the fountain and a handsome motor car was drawn up at the curb before it.

"I'll get chocolate, with ice-cream," Sunny Boy decided, jingling his remaining pennies.

He climbed up, with some difficulty, on

one of the high stools, and gave his order. The white-jacketed boy back of the counter brought it to him, and with it a pale green check.

“Good, isn’t it?” smiled the white-haired lady who sat next to Sunny Boy, as he took the first spoonful.

Sunny nodded and smiled, not knowing just what to say.

He had half finished when the boy in the white jacket came back to him.

“Fifteen cents, please,” he said politely.

Sunny Boy put his hand in his pocket and brought out a little heap of pennies. He pushed them toward the green check.

“Only eleven cents here,” said the boy impatiently. “Four cents more, please.”

Sunny Boy looked at him silently, clutching his soda glass tightly with both hands.

“What is it, dear?” asked the white-haired lady, who was pulling on her gloves, having

finished her soda water. "Haven't you enough money?"

Sunny's lower lip trembled. He shook his head. There was a big lump in his throat, and he couldn't have spoken had he tried.

"How much is it? I'll pay for it," said the lady, fumbling in her purse. "Give the child his pennies, and take the check out of this." She pushed a bill toward the boy.

"Now drink your soda, dear," she went on kindly. "Do you live here in the town?"

"He lives over in the summer colony," volunteered the boy, bringing back the change. "My father's postmaster and he knows every one. I don't believe his folks know he's over here alone. Do they, Buddy?"

Sunny Boy put down his spoon and got off the stool. He didn't like to be called buddy, and he had just remembered that his

mother didn't know where he was. She would worry if he was not home at lunch time.

"Take your money, kid," said the boy, who really meant to be kind. "How are you going to pay jitney fare without a cent in your pocket? Here, take it."

Sunny Boy thrust the pennies back in his pocket.

"Thank you very much," he said to the white-haired lady. "I think perhaps my mother wants me now."

The soda fountain boy laughed, but the lady did not. She was very sweet and serious.

"I wish you'd let me take you home in my car," she suggested, quite as one friend to another. "You may have to wait for a jitney fifteen or twenty minutes, and my chauffeur can have you home in less time than that. What do you say?"

Sunny Boy nodded, and they got into the

beautiful pale gray car, the tall young chauffeur holding open the door for them. He wore a gray uniform and the light linen robe he spread over them was gray, too.

“Curly has hair just like yours,” said Sunny Boy suddenly. He had been studying the white-haired lady, and he paid her the biggest compliment he could. He thought Curly’s silky white hair very lovely.

The lady smiled.

“Who is Curly?” she asked.

Sunny Boy told her about the little dog he had found in the storm, how pretty it was, and how many tricks it could do. The white-haired lady sat up straighter and straighter, and the prettiest pink came into her cheeks under her gray veil.

“Carlton, do you hear?” she cried to the chauffeur. “I believe this child has found Bon-Bon!”

“Bon-Bon?” echoed Sunny Boy, bewildered.

“Yes, Bon-Bon, my dear little dog. My son brought him to me from France. Is he very tiny, with a sharp little black nose and slim feet? I thought so! Why you don’t know how glad I am! And to think you’ve been taking such wonderful care of him all this time!” The white-haired lady threw her arms around Sunny Boy and hugged him tightly.

“There he is now,” said the chauffeur, stopping the car before the Horton bungalow.

Curly, or Bon-Bon as the lady called him, sat on the top step of the porch, watching them.

CHAPTER XIII

CURLY IS FOUND

THE white-haired lady was out of the car the instant it stopped and up the walk, her silk skirts flying in the wind.

“Bon-Bon! Bon-Bon!” she called. Then she said something that Sunny Boy could not understand. Afterward she told him that it was French for “Littlest one.”

Curly leaped upon her, barking madly.

The lady took him in her arms and sat down on the step, and, to Sunny Boy’s amazement, began to cry.

The noise of the dog’s barking brought Mrs. Horton to the door.

“Why, Sunny Boy, where in the world have you been?” she said quickly. “It’s al-

most one o'clock. Harriet was just going down to the beach to look for you."

Then she saw the strange car at the curb and the strange lady on her doorstep. The lady stood up and held out her hand.

"I am Mrs. Raymond," she said. "Colonel Francis Raymond's wife. I believe my husband has met Mr. Horton. And now I find your little boy has found my pet dog."

Mrs. Horton was very much surprised and greatly pleased to learn that at last Curly's own people had been found. She asked Mrs. Raymond to come in and stay to lunch with them, but Mrs. Raymond had an appointment at two o'clock several miles away with the colonel, and lunch would be ready there for the white-haired lady. She and Mrs. Horton talked very fast, and Sunny Boy could not understand all they said.

"We advertised and put up a bulletin notice," he heard Mother say, "and we couldn't understand why no one claimed the

dog. It was so evidently a pet, that we knew it couldn't have been abandoned, and though exhausted by the storm, it seemed so well-fed we were sure it had not been lost very long."

"I lost him the same day you found him," explained Mrs. Raymond. "Carlton, the chauffeur, was taking the car up to Draper Inlet to get my husband. That's twenty miles up the coast from our cottage, and Bon-Bon loves so to ride that he never misses a chance to go in the car. He rode in the back and the hood was down and I suppose he was on top of that, as he often was. Carlton was trying to make the inlet before the storm, and I imagine he drove at a pretty hard pace. Bon-Bon was evidently jolted out going through Nestle Cove, and neither my husband nor Carlton thought of the dog again till they reached home and I asked for him."

"And of course you didn't know where he

"Vas lost," said Mrs. Horton sympathetically.

"No, though my husband and Carlton hunted and hunted. But now everything is all right again. Sunny Boy has made me very happy!"

Mrs. Horton walked with her guest toward the door.

"But what I don't understand yet," she said, puzzled, "is how you met Sunny Boy and he mentioned the dog. Were you out searching?"

Sunny's face got very red.

"No, I'd simply stopped in town to get a cool soda before going on to meet Colonel Raymond," said Mrs. Raymond. "I think Sunny Boy had better tell you all about it. Kiss me good-by, dear. I'm going to send you the very nicest thing I can buy in the city for being so good to my dog. You won't feel too bad if I take him away now, will you, Sunny Boy?"

“No, I—I guess not,” quavered Sunny Boy uncertainly.

He kissed Mrs. Raymond, and gave Bon-Bon, for we might as well call the dog by its right name now that we know it, a big hug. Then he sat down on the top step while Mrs. Horton walked with Bon-Bon’s owner to the car. They stood there several minutes, talking, and then Mrs. Raymond got in and drove away.

Mrs. Horton came up the path, but Sunny Boy did not look at her. He was studying a crack in the step with great interest.

“Lunch is on the table, Mrs. Horton,” announced Harriet. “Most everything’s spoiled, it’s so late.”

“I’m ever so sorry, Harriet, but it couldn’t be helped this time,” answered Sunny’s mother pleasantly. “Sunny Boy, I want you to go to your room. Harriet will bring you a bowl of bread and milk, and when you

have eaten that I'm coming in to talk to you."

Sunny Boy went slowly to his room. When Harriet brought the bread and milk, he ate it. In perhaps half an hour his mother came into the room, closing the door quietly.

She drew a low rocking chair near the window where Sunny Boy stood looking out, and, sitting down, put her arm about him.

"Now tell Mother all about it," she said, gently turning Sunny Boy around so that he faced her.

"I wanted to go on the merry-go-round," explained Sunny Boy, tracing with his forefinger the outline of one of the pink roses that grew on Mother's pretty white dress.

"Well?"

"So I went to town—" Sunny Boy began on another rose.

"And you didn't ask me? Did you run away, Sunny Boy?"

Sunny Boy was very uncomfortable. His throat didn't feel right. And he couldn't look at his own dear mother, though usually he loved to watch her face. He wasn't a *Sunny Boy* just now.

"Did you run away, Arthur?" she asked again.

Sunny Boy nodded miserably, still finger-ing the pink roses.

Mrs. Horton did not say anything for a moment. She seemed to be thinking. Then she gathered both of Sunny Boy's small hands in her smooth, soft right hand, keeping her left arm around him.

"Listen to Mother carefully, dear," she said firmly. "This all happened because you were cross. Any other morning you would have found something pleasant to do. But when a little boy makes up his mind to be cross and not to be pleased with anything he usually winds up by doing something naughty."

Two big tears fell out of Sunny Boy's eyes and rolled down his cheeks. He was very unhappy.

"What do you suppose Daddy would say," continued his mother, "if he knew you had gone over to town without saying a word to me? I think he would say that he was surprised and grieved to learn that his only son couldn't be trusted. Because that is what it really means—that Daddy and Mother can not trust a little boy who, just because the day doesn't go to suit him, runs away and lets his mother worry about him."

Sunny Boy put his yellow head down in Mother's lap and cried as though his heart would break.

"Don't you really trust me, Mother?" he managed to sob out.

Mother's soft arms drew him into her lap.

"Well, yes, I do," she admitted, smoothing his hair. "Because, you see, dear, I think you are sorry and will not do it again. Be-

ing sorry makes all the difference in the world."

Sunny Boy sat up, and this time he found he could look right into Mother's deep brown eyes.

"I'm sorry—honest," he told the little boy he saw there.

"All right, I believe you," Mother assured him promptly. "I think you will have to stay here in your room till supper time to help you remember not to be cross again, and after that we'll forget about it. Now tell Mother what you did over in town."

Sunny Boy told her all about his trip, from the jitney and merry-go-round rides to his experience at the soda fountain where kind Mrs. Raymond had paid for his soda-water.

"An' wasn't it funny Curly was her dog?" he wound up.

"Yes, indeed," agreed Mother. "I'm glad the dog found his mistress. There, I hear the clock striking three. I must go to the

station to meet Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson."

"I s'pect they'll wonder where I am," said Sunny Boy sadly.

"They probably will," sighed Mother. "Never mind, Son, just remember you are never going to run away again."

And Sunny Boy did remember.

"Why did Mrs. Raymond cry when she found Curly?" he asked, as Mrs. Horton turned to leave the room. "Did her little boy die in the war?"

"No, dear," answered Mrs. Horton. "He came home from France and brought his mother the dog you call Curly and she calls Bon-Bon. But her son—he was a Captain—lived only a few months after he landed in this country; he was invalided home. So, you see, poor little Bon-Bon means a great deal to Mrs. Raymond because her boy thought to bring him all the way from France to his mother."

After Mother had gone—Sunny Boy heard the noise of the car as it started for the station, though his room was on the wrong side of the house to see the garage—he thought a great deal about the little lost dog and the brave soldier who had brought it home to his mother. The more he thought, the gladder Sunny Boy was to know that Mrs. Raymond had her dog again.

Two or three days later he was sitting on the front porch waiting for Aunt Bessie to go swimming with him (Sunny Boy could really swim very nicely now) when the parcel-post wagon drew up before the house. The driver grinned as Sunny Boy came flying down the path.

“Package for Arthur Bradford Horton,” he announced cheerfully. “Is that the little boy who lives next door?”

“Course not!” Sunny Boy was startled at the idea that his package might go to the

boy next door. "That's my name. Is there something for me?"

"Looks like it," admitted the man. "Here you, don't get under the horse's feet. I'm handing it to you as fast as I can. There you are. Like Christmas, isn't it?"

Sunny Boy took his package and said "thank you." It was a large package, and he wondered what could be in it and who had sent it to him.

"Maybe it's from Grandpa," he told his mother, as she and Aunt Bessie came out on the porch.

CHAPTER XIV

LOST ON THE OCEAN

“**P**ERHAPS he has sent you some fresh eggs from the farm,” teased Aunt Bessie.

“Or a pound of fresh, sweet butter,” suggested Miss Martinson, coming out on her way to the bathhouse.

“Open it, precious, and see,” urged Mrs. Horton.

So Sunny Boy sat down and carefully untied the red cord and took off the wrapping paper. There was a pasteboard box tied with more string to be opened then.

“Why—why—” Sunny Boy, peeping down under the tissue paper that packed this box, uttered a shriek of delight.

“Look, Mother!” he shouted. “It’s a boat!”

It was a boat, sure enough—a beautiful boat with three sails and two decks and a large American flag in her bow. Her name was painted on her sides in bright blue letters—*The Billow*.

Sunny Boy was delighted.

“Did Grandpa send it?” he asked, his eyes big with surprise.

“I hardly think so,” smiled Mrs. Horton. “See, dear, here is a card that dropped out. Shall I read it to you? ‘To Sunny Boy, with love from Mrs. Raymond and Bon-Bon.’ Mrs. Raymond sent it to you, precious.”

Sunny Boy, of course, wanted to sail his boat immediately. Ellen and Ralph—Stephen had gone home—who came over presently thought it was the finest boat they had ever seen. Ralph had one or two boats, but none as large as *The Billow*.

"You can sail her sometimes," offered Sunny Boy. "You get your *Frolic* now and let's go down to the beach and play with 'em. I've got my bathing suit on."

"If you chickens are going to sail boats, you'll have to keep away from the bathing beach," announced Aunt Bessie decidedly. "You can't sail boats in a surf, anyway. Go over on the other side of the Cove where it is shallow and smoother."

So the three children, the two boys carrying their boats, marched over to the side of the Cove where a small fleet of rowboats were kept at anchor and where the only house in sight was a small shanty where an old fisherman lived who made his living by selling tackle and bait.

"Guess Mr. Grimes has taken out a fishing party to-day," said Ralph, noticing that the shanty door was closed. "His boat's gone, too. Come on now, Sunny, let's see *The Billow* race the *Frolic*."

The Billow rested lightly on the water, and as there was hardly a breath of wind, Sunny Boy had to tow her instead of letting her sails carry her. But towing your boat on a warm summer's day when you have your bathing suit on and are not afraid of getting wet, is great fun.

"If there was any wind, I guess your boat could beat mine," conceded Ralph generously. "But if we can't sail 'em, let's play taking fishing parties out."

"How?" asked Sunny Boy practically.

"Well, we have to have some people—make-believe, of course," answered Ralph. "An' then we ought to have something to eat."

"Ellen's paper dolls would do for people," said Sunny Boy. "We'll ask her if she'll go an' get 'em. And I'll go and ask Harriet for something to eat."

"All right," agreed Ralph. "I'll hold the boats till you come back. Hi, Ellen!" he

called to his little sister. "Want to give your paper dolls a sail?"

Ellen was willing, when she understood what the boys wanted, and she trotted up the beach with Sunny Boy to fetch the paper doll family. At the corner they parted, Sunny Boy to ask Harriet for a "piece of picnic," as he said.

"Something to eat?" repeated Harriet in pretended surprise. "Why, Sunny Boy! Weren't you here for breakfast? Well, I suppose if you are going to take a sailing party out, you'll have to see that they are fed. How will three of these sandwiches I'm making for supper to-night do? And three chocolate cup cakes? All right, here you are—and mind you bring home a fish."

Ellen came flying down the street with her paper dolls as Sunny Boy started with his food, and though she eyed the delicious little cakes hungrily, she waited politely till they had joined Ralph on the beach.

“Oh, my!” said Ellen’s brother, when he saw what Sunny Boy had brought. “Gee, I’m hungry! Let’s eat before we take our sailing parties out, Sunny.”

This suited Sunny Boy, and as Ellen made no objection, the three children sat down comfortably in the sand and ate every crumb of Harriet’s goodies.

“And now,” announced Ellen, rising and shaking the short skirt of her bathing suit free of sand, “Mr. and Mrs. Smith and the seven Smith children want to go fishing for whitebait.”

This large Smith family were Ellen’s best paper dolls, cut from the colored fashion plates, and though, as Sunny Boy sensibly said, they were not exactly dressed for a fishing trip, still they did look as though they were pleased at such a prospect. Mrs. Smith wore a red velvet suit and a feathered hat, and her husband was in full evening dress; three of the girls had silver and gold

dresses, two of them wore skating costumes, and the one boy was wearing his bathrobe. Ralph said he probably had his bathing suit on underneath, and we'll hope he had.

"Let the younger children go on Ralph's boat," suggested Ellen, "and Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their son can go with Sunny Boy."

She arranged them all neatly, weighted them down with shells so they would not blow away, and the two boys set off, towing the boats.

But when they came back from the first trip, there was trouble at once.

"Where's Mr. Smith?" demanded Ellen, counting her dolls as soon as the ships were steadied in the sand.

"Mr. Smith?" echoed Sunny Boy helplessly. "Why—why—isn't he there?"

"He isn't here," said Ellen coldly. "And the shell that held him down isn't here. And, Ralph, where is Lucile?"

Lucile was one of the paper dolls who wore a silver frock.

"Gee! I suppose they're washed away," admitted Ralph. "I'm awfully sorry, honest, Ellen. Sunny and I were watching a boat 'way out, and we didn't look back at our ships. I'll ask Mother to let you have the new fashion magazine to-night."

"Well, Mr. Smith was torn in one place," said Ellen kindly. "And I never did care so much for Lucile. Daddy always called her cross-eyed. So you needn't care, Ralph."

"What'll we do now?" asked Ralph, tired of the responsibility of taking paper dolls sailing. A fellow couldn't be expected to keep the silly things from blowing away. "What'll we do now, Sunny?"

"Yes, what'll we do, Sunny?" chimed in Ellen.

Sunny Boy could usually be counted on to think of some game. He played alone so

much, and, having no sister or brother, often had to depend upon himself for amusement.

“We’ll play dry-dock,” he suggested now. “Put our ships up for repairs, you know. Come on, Ellen, you can help build the dry-dock.”

Sunny Boy had seen pictures of the great dry-docks where ships were sent to be repaired and painted, and he really had a very clear idea of how they were used. Naturally, he wasn’t so sure how they were built, but together he and Ralph and Ellen made an arrangement of sticks that looked very imposing, and into which they fitted the *Frolic* and *The Billow* with some difficulty.

“I think we’ll take ‘em out for another sail,” said Sunny Boy, after the dry-dock was pronounced finished. “And perhaps we’ll have a wreck. You stay on shore and signal to us, Ellen.”

“Then we’ll come in and go into dry-dock for repairs! That will be fun,” agreed

Ralph. "Come on, let's have a big wreck."

But before they could have a wreck, Ellen called them.

"Look what I've found!" she cried.

The boys waded back and tied their ships to a cable that held a half-sunken scow. Ellen had captured a butterfly, yellow with black spots, and they watched it flutter its beautiful wings in her hands. It didn't seem to want to fly away.

"Perhaps he is a tame butterfly," suggested Sunny Boy. "Let's give him a sail on *The Billow*."

He straightened up and looked out to where he had left his boat, gently rocking on the water. Only Ralph's *Frolic* was still tied, and *The Billow* was drifting out to sea.

"Ralph!" gasped Sunny Boy. "Look! My boat's untied!"

He waded into the water, but Ralph, splashing after him, caught him by his shirt.

"It's deep out there—the beach goes

down," Ralph explained. "You can't catch it, Sunny Boy."

"Daddy's coming down to-day and I wanted to show it to him," Sunny Boy almost sobbed. "I just have to get it, Ralph. I know! I'll row after it. Come on, we'll take this boat."

Sunny Boy began to untie the rope that fastened one of the rowboats.

"Don't you go, Ralph," ordered his little sister. "You know Mother wouldn't like it. Sunny Boy, you won't catch your boat, an' maybe you'll be drowned."

"Won't neither," retorted Sunny Boy ungraciously, working at the stiff rope. "Nobody gets drowned in rowboats—so there!"

The rope untied, he scrambled into the boat.

Ralph would probably have gone with him, but Ellen began to cry and repeated that she knew their mother wouldn't like it, and so he stayed with her.

To his relief, Sunny Boy found that he would not need the oars which were in the bottom of the boat, for the tide was carrying his boat just as it had carried out *The Billow*. The oars were so heavy that Sunny Boy never could have handled them.

"I'll catch it in a minute," Sunny Boy told himself, as his boat drifted gently along, "then Ellen will be sorry she was such a cry-baby."

But he didn't catch *The Billow* in a minute. That dancing little boat sailed on out of sight and Sunny Boy's boat moved evenly along till presently he couldn't see any land at all. He began to wonder how he was going to get back.

"Where's Sunny Boy?" asked Mrs. Horton when lunch time came. "Won't he be surprised to find you here, Daddy?"

"Where's Sunny Boy?" asked Mr. Hor-

ton, who had come down on an earlier train than usual.

Half an hour passed, an hour. Still no Sunny Boy.

“I’m worried!” Mrs. Horton paced up and down the porch nervously. “I know he hasn’t run away again. Oh, Daddy, where can he be?”

“There are the Gray children,” said Aunt Bessie. “Sunny Boy was sailing boats with them this morning. Call them over and ask them.”

“Sunny Boy?” repeated Ellen when Mrs. Horton asked her. “Oh, his boat got untied, and Sunny took a big boat and went after it. An’ he didn’t ask the man who owned it or nothin’. I wouldn’t let Ralph go, ’cause my mother says rowboats are dangerous.”

Mrs. Horton turned very white.

“There, there, Olive,” said her husband. “It is a beautiful calm day, and he will be all

right. We'll get Captain Franklin to take us in his motor-boat, and we ought to pick him up without much trouble. He can't have drifted very far."

"Why didn't you come and tell us?" asked Mrs. Horton, catching up a sweater and running down the steps after her husband. "Ellen dear, what could you have been thinking of not to let us know?"

"I thought Sunny Boy would be back," said Ellen. "He said it wouldn't take him but just a minute."

Captain Franklin was an old sea captain with a wrinkled kind brown face and keen blue eyes.

"Sure we'll find him, ma'am," he assured Mrs. Horton, when he had heard the story of the lost Sunny Boy. "Just let me put some fresh water on board and see if the cracker box is full, an' we'll start right out. Never go out, if it's only across the bay, without fresh water. You never know

when you'll need it. And the little feller will be mighty thirsty when we do find him."

"Better get a tube of cold cream," Mr. Horton advised his wife. "The glare on the water will burn Sunny Boy even if he is tanned. You can get some in that little shop there."

Mrs. Horton bought some cold cream in the little shop where fishing supplies were sold, and as soon as Captain Franklin had filled his water kegs they set out.

"Chug-chug-chug!" sang the motor-boat engine cheerily. "We're going to find Sunny Boy. Chug-chug-chug!"

And what was Sunny Boy doing all this time, alone in his boat and so far out on the big ocean?

When he found that he couldn't see the land and that *The Billow* had disappeared, Sunny Boy was puzzled.

"Where did it go?" he asked. "I was looking right at it, an' now it's gone. Maybe I'd better turn my boat around."

But he could not turn the boat around. Indeed, it seemed that that rowboat intended to do exactly as it pleased. And it wanted to go right on, sailing out to sea.

"Maybe we'll come to China," thought Sunny Boy, not knowing very clearly where China was. "Only I would rather have another some one with me. I wish Ralph had come."

The sun began to burn him and he wished for some shade.

"The ocean's awfully sunny," sighed poor Sunny Boy. "I feel queer inside."

He was hungry, but he didn't know it. The queer feeling grew worse and worse.

"My mother wouldn't like me to be sick," he said aloud. "I wish I had a drink of water."

He was really very thirsty, having had no

water since breakfast. It was now two or three o'clock in the afternoon, though there was nothing to tell Sunny Boy the time. He had never gone without a meal in his life, and whenever he had wanted a drink of water it had always been easy to get. Sunny Boy, if he had only known it, was experiencing some of the worst troubles of shipwrecked sailors.

"I'm lonesome—but I won't cry," he said stoutly.

His voice sounded so little on the wide stretch of blue water that he knew, deep down in his heart, no one could hear him. But he stood up in the boat—luckily it was a flat-bottomed rowboat or it might have tipped and spilled him out and that would have been a serious matter—and shouted as loud as he could. He shouted until he was tired, and then, realizing that he was a very little boy alone on a very big ocean, brave little Sunny Boy did give up and cried. And

some grown men, in his place, would have cried, too.

Curled down in the bottom of the boat, he rested his head on one of the seats and tried to shut out the hot sunlight.

“I wish,” he murmured drowsily, “I had a drink of water. I wish Mother was here. I wish I had my boat to show Daddy.”

Then, still making more wishes, Sunny Boy fell asleep.

CHAPTER XV

A HAPPY ENDING

THE cheerful chug-chug of Captain Franklin's motor-boat, on its way to find Sunny Boy, was something of a comfort to Sunny's anxious mother.

"He can hear it while we're afar off," she said to Mr. Horton, "and perhaps he will stand up and wave. How dreadful it must be, Harry, for sailors to beadrift on this great ocean for days at a time."

"Yes indeed," nodded Mr. Horton, "but Sunny Boy, you know, isn't going to beadrift even one day. What's the matter?"

The noise of the engine stopped and the *Rocket* began to drift.

"Engine trouble," explained the captain

briefly. "I'll have to ask you to move a bit while I get those tools under the seat."

Poor Mrs. Horton looked as if she would like to cry. It was hard, when she felt that every minute they were delayed Sunny's boat might be going farther and farther out to sea.

"Don't worry, ma'am," said the kind captain, who knew perfectly well that she was uneasy and fretting. "I know what the trouble is, and I'll have her going in a minute. If I were you, I'd eat a bite, or take a drink of milk. I've a fresh bottle in that locker there. You don't want to get played out before we come up with the little chap."

Mrs. Horton drank a glass of milk, but she could not eat. And presently "chug-chug, chug-chug!" sounded merrily again.

"Now we'll make up lost seconds," said Captain Franklin sturdily.

"There's a boat!" cried Mrs. Horton suddenly.

"It's one of the fishing fleet," replied the captain, who knew practically every boat in the harbor. "One of the men has likely rowed out with bait for a party that wants to stay out all night. But I'll hail him."

He stood up, and, putting his hands to his mouth, roared, not "Ship Ahoy!" as they do in books, and as Mrs. Horton secretly expected him to, but "Hey, you!"

Tired and anxious as she was, Sunny's mother had to laugh.

"Seen anything of a stray rowboat this afternoon?" the captain was calling. "White boat, broad green stripe—one of Jo Grimes'. Haven't passed it, have you?"

The solitary man in the other boat stood up and bellowed something in reply that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Horton could understand.

"He says he hasn't seen any boat since dinner time," said the captain, dropping back into his place by the engine. "I was

hoping he hadn't. Ned Butterworth is so slow, he'd never think of stopping the boat if it ran smack into him."

Meanwhile, Sunny Boy had wakened and found he was still thirsty. He remembered something Harriet had once told him when he was a very little boy and had teased for a drink when they were somewhere where she did not find it easy to get one for him.

"Take your mind off your troubles," had been Harriet's counsel. "Think about something else, and you'll forget you are thirsty. Count the red roses on this wallpaper. I'll help you."

And Sunny Boy, with the help of his baby fingers, had gone to counting red wall paper roses and forgotten his thirst, just as Harriet said.

"But I'm thirstier now," said poor Sunny Boy to himself. "What'll I count? Clouds?"

He began to count the gray-white clouds

scudding swiftly across the sky. He counted six, ten, eleven.

“Big ones should count more,” he murmured sleepily.

His yellow head was beginning to nod again.

“Thirteen. What comes after thirteen?” he puzzled.

His eyes shut tight.

When he woke he did not know where he was at first. He lay quietly in the bottom of the boat, thinking, and then when he saw the oars, he remembered. He sat up.

The hot sun had gone under a cloud, and the ocean was no longer blue, but gray. It was hot and still.

Now when Sunny Boy sat up to look about him, something happened.

“Chug-chug, chug-chug!” said the motor-boat, carrying Mr. and Mrs. Horton and Captain Franklin.

“That looks like a rowboat,” whispered

the captain to Mr. Horton, putting down his field glasses. "Don't tell Mrs. Horton—it's empty."

But Mrs. Horton had heard, and she took the glasses before any one could stop her. Just as she put them to her eyes Sunny Boy sat up in the boat.

"He's in it!" cried Mrs. Horton joyfully. "See, Harry, that little black dot must be his head. Oh, hurry, Captain, hurry!"

"Chug-chug, chug-chug!" gurgled the swift little motor-boat, fairly leaping through the water. "I'll do my best. Chug-chug."

And it wasn't very long before Sunny Boy heard the noise of the engine and he stood up to look. There was a boat coming straight toward him.

"Sit still!" called Mr. Horton. "Don't jump about, Sunny Boy. We'll be right there."

The motor-boat scraped alongside, and

Sunny was lifted over and placed on his mother's lap.

"My precious!" she whispered, kissing him. "Oh, my dear little boy, to think I have you in my arms!"

"Don't cry," implored Sunny Boy, surprised to see tears running down her face. "I'm all right, Mother. But I didn't catch up with my boat."

Captain Franklin was fastening the row-boat Sunny Boy had been in to his own boat, because, as he explained to Mrs. Horton who wanted him to leave it and hurry them back to the Cove, some one might find it and think the rower had drowned.

"Besides, Jo Grimes, whose boat 'tis," said the kind captain, "might like to use her again. All right, Bub, aren't you?"

"Could I have a drink?" asked Sunny Boy wistfully.

"All ready and waiting for you," responded the captain promptly. "Guess

you're hungry, too. We brought a biscuit or so along—got them in here somewhere."

While Sunny Boy drank the cool, fresh water—and you probably have no idea how good it tasted, because you have never been as thirsty as he was—and ate his crackers, Mrs. Horton gently rubbed his sunburned little face and hands with the cold cream.

"Going to be a storm," announced the captain, watching the gray sky. "Plenty of wind, most likely. Lucky we found the little fellow, or he might have been blown pretty far out."

The wind began to blow as the captain spoke, and the spray dashed high over the *Rocket*. Mrs. Horton went into the tiny cabin, but Sunny Boy and his father stayed with the captain. They were wrapped in oilskin coats he lent them, and it was very exciting to watch the *Rocket* cut through the waves.

"Wouldn't the wind blow her ashore

'thout any engine?" Sunny asked, after studying the clouds for a moment.

They were thick, dark clouds, and the wind was blowing them in toward the shore.

"It might," admitted the captain, his blue eyes twinkling. "But the wind's a tricky friend. You never know just where you're going to land, once you give right up to him. I'd rather pin my faith to this little comrade here," patting the tarpaulin that covered the noisy little engine and kept it dry.

When the rain came it fell in big splashy drops, and the wind began to moan. Sunny Boy was glad to see the land ahead, and he thought the way Captain Franklin steered the *Rocket* in alongside the little rickety wharf nothing short of wonderful.

"Here we are!" announced the captain cheerfully. "And I guess you've had enough sea-voyaging for one afternoon, heh?"

Sunny Boy agreed with him. Mr. Hor-

ton stayed to thank the good captain and to pay him for taking them out in the motor-boat, and Sunny Boy and his mother picked their way along the beach, intending to cross to the road where the sand was firmer. The rain had settled down into a steady drizzle.

"I hope the little boy who finds my boat will take good care of it," said Sunny Boy. He couldn't stop thinking about the beautiful *Billow* he had lost. "I was just as sure I could catch it, Mother."

"Oh, darling, don't talk any more about it!" exclaimed his mother, stopping to hug him. "When I think of you out on that great ocean, all alone in that flimsy boat—well, I don't see how I can ever love the sea again."

"Why, it was a very nice sea," insisted Sunny Boy. "Only it's too salty to drink. What's that in the sand, Mother—paper from sandwiches?"

He ran a little forward to look.

“Mother!” he shouted, kneeling in the wet sand and beginning to dig frantically. “Mother! I’ve found *The Billow*!”

Sure enough, he had. The gallant sail-boat was half buried in the sand, the beautiful white sails all draggled and wet. The wind had evidently driven her ashore and up on the beach.

“That’s what happens to real boats when they are shipwrecked,” said Mr. Horton, who caught up to them as they were examining the ship. “You’re lucky, Sunny Boy; Mother can make you a new set of sails and your boat will be all right and as good as ever. Ever so many ships are hopelessly wrecked by being driven on the beach.”

Sunny Boy hugged his recovered treasure happily. He was puzzled to know how *The Billow* could have sailed ashore while he was hunting it, for he thought he had looked very carefully. He finally decided in his own mind that his boat had passed the motor.

boat in the storm and that the high waves had kept him from seeing it. Even yet Sunny Boy did not realize how wide and how vast the ocean is, or understand that many, many ships may pass daily on the sea so many miles apart that they can not see each other.

“Here’s Sunny!” shrieked Ellen, running out as the Hortons passed the Gray bungalow. “You didn’t get drowned, did you? And look, Ralph, he caught up with *The Bellow*, and—”

Sunny Boy would have stayed to explain to Ellen, but Daddy and Mother hurried him along to get into dry clothes. And when he reached the house Aunt Bessie and Miss Martinson and Harriet had to stop him and hug him and hear all about his experience. You should have seen the dinner Harriet had ready for him when he was dressed in clean, dry clothes. She had even sent over to town for chocolate ice-cream.

“Olive,” said Mr. Horton to his wife the

next morning, "Sunny Boy and his sailing expedition made me forget to speak to you about a letter that came by special delivery yesterday morning. It's from Wright, and he says that deal will drag along for several months unless I come on to New York."

Sunny Boy was watching his mother cutting out new sails for *The Billow* and he knew he must not interrupt Daddy when he was talking business. He wanted dreadfully to ask Daddy not to go away.

"I was thinking that you and Sunny Boy and I might go to New York for three or four weeks," went on Mr. Horton, just as he might say: "Suppose we go home to-morrow."

Sunny's mother put down her shears.

"Go to New York!" she echoed. "Why, think of the expense. And what should I do with Sunny Boy in a hotel?"

"Have a good time," smiled Mr. Horton. "I'm in earnest, Olive. The girls will go

back to school next week, Betty will, that is, and Bessie wants to get her fall schedule started. Let 'em go, and keep Harriet till we get back. You'd like to see New York, wouldn't you, Sunny Boy?"

Sunny Boy nodded. He was too amazed to speak.

"But you'll have a great deal on your mind," argued Mrs. Horton. "Sha'n't we be in the way? And I wanted to send Sunny Boy to the kindergarten this fall."

"Plenty of time after we get back," announced Mr. Horton, tousling Sunny's hair playfully. "I think I'll need my wife and son to help me put through this big contract. I'll find some time to play around with you, too. But mostly I'm afraid you will have to keep each other company."

Sunny Boy took his boat under his arm without waiting for the new sails, and went out to find Ellen and Ralph.

"When are you going?" demanded Ralph,

as soon as he heard that Sunny Boy was going to New York. "My cousin lives there."

"Going week after next," said Sunny Boy. "I wish you were going too."

"Goodness, we have to go to school," declared Ellen importantly. "My mother says education just mustn't be ne-ne-glected."

Sunny Boy was troubled.

"I'm going to kindergarten when we come back," he explained hesitatingly.

"Oh, traveling's good for you," admitted Ellen, who was a fair little person in spite of her condescending ways at times. "My mother says you can learn a lot by traveling in different places."

So Sunny Boy felt better, for of course he didn't want to go through life without education. No one does.

Ellen and Ralph and Sunny Boy had only a few more days to play together at Nestle Cove. Then they separated, Ellen and

Ralph to go home to the small town where they lived and go to school, and Sunny Boy and his mother and father to get ready for the trip to New York. And if you want to read what Sunny Boy thought of that busy, bustling place, and what he did there, and what he saw, you'll have to read "**SUNNY BOY IN THE BIG CITY.**"

THE END

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By Ramy Allison White



Children, meet Sunny Boy, a little fellow with big eyes and an inquiring disposition, who finds the world a large and wonderful thing indeed. And somehow there is lots going on, when Sunny Boy is around. Perhaps he helps push! In the first book of this new series he has the finest time ever, with his Grandpa out in the country. He learns a lot and he helps a lot, in his small way. Then he has a glorious visit to the seashore, but

this is in the next story. And there are still more adventures in the other books. You will like Sunny Boy.

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10. SUNNY BOY AND HIS BIG DOG.
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The Two Little Fellows Series



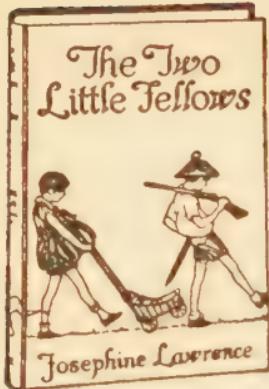
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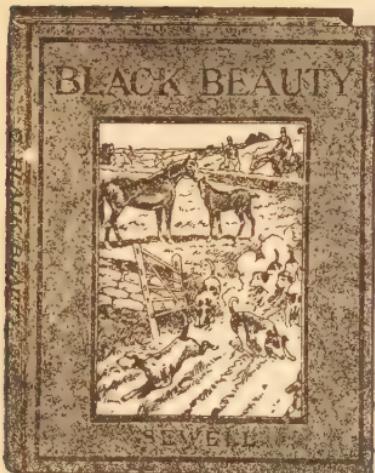
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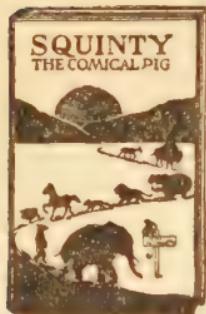
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